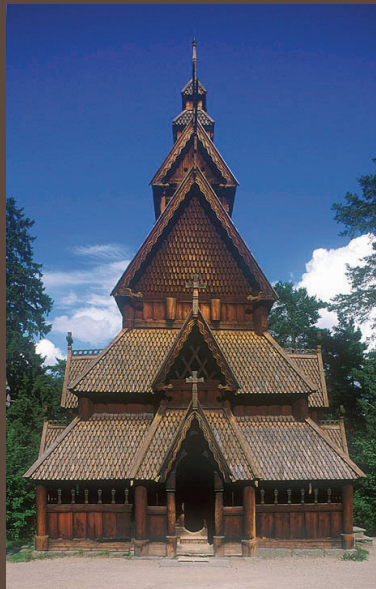


Waldorf Journal Project #16
October 2010
AWSNA

Classroom Considerations

by

Jørgen Smit



Compiled and edited by

David Mitchell

Remember . . . you are not a human being having
a spiritual experience, you are a spiritual being
having a human experience

– TAO

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Foreword

The Waldorf Journal Project, sponsored by the Waldorf Curriculum Fund, brings translations of essays, magazine articles, and specialized studies from around the world to English-speaking audiences. This sixteenth edition explores the writings of Jørgen Smit.

Jørgen was a class teacher in Bergen, Norway, a founder of the teacher training seminar in Jarna, Sweden, and member of the Vorstand at the Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland.

We hope that this Journal will help teachers and others gain insight into the seeds of Waldorf education. The Waldorf Journal Project #16 is available online at

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The editor is interested in receiving your comments on the material selected. We would also be interested in hearing what areas you would like to see represented in future Journal projects. If you know of specific articles that you would like to see translated, please contact me.

– David Mitchell, editor
Waldorf Journal Projects





The Role of Mythology in Education

by

Jørgen Smit

You must have a certain amount of courage when you decide to send your children to the Waldorf school. This is true whenever you leave the standard, well-developed path and head in new directions. As long as we remain on the asphalt highways, even if we go blind, nothing catastrophic will necessarily happen. But when we enter new territory we need to keep our eyes open for every surprise that is streaming towards us.

Asphalt highways are excellent and necessary to use when we need to arrive at a destination quickly. But for education and learning they are destructive. The life elements at home and at school must be the stream of surprises! Parents and teachers must learn to dive into them, if they really want to help their children. Every person we meet can be a surprise, even if we already met them one thousand times before. For everything living activity is never the same. It changes constantly. There are always new developments.

If we write a letter to someone we have not seen for five years, it may be possible that we are writing not to the real person but to our mental image of the person of five years ago. In such cases we can easily realize we are filled with excitement. We open ourselves for surprises. Then why do we not have the same excitement when we meet a person? How can we know in advance that the person is the same as before? Let's face it, we are extremely lazy and therefore we like to assume that everything is as it was. We wrap ourselves in a grey fog of indifference.

Many times it is not difficult to take on surprises, for example when we inherit a fortune. Other times the surprises can hit us in such a way

that we roll down the curtains and pretend that nothing has happened. This is true of everything that does not follow what we intend. Extra work is demanded of us when we revise old mental images. It is much more comfortable to leave them in the old folder.

Mythology can be such a surprise. For example, some people who are positive about Waldorf education say that the students' workbooks on mythology are so strange, fantastical and nonsensical that you just have to live with them. Otherwise the school is good. This is very understandable. The opposite would be a surprise when we consider how mythology has been treated in our schools and in most people's consciousness during the past one hundred years.

If we take some poems by Welhaven from one hundred years ago, we notice that they are filled with mythological names, Greek gods and heroes. But for whom did Welhaven write? It was not for the broad public. Actually it was for a select, elite group of educated people.

Then the technological revolution took place. We distanced ourselves from the classical world. Greek and Latin were shoved out of the schools and therewith all knowledge of mythology. All that is left are some of the most important names that children sometimes learn by heart. If teachers would share any more than that, it would be considered disrespectful.

The result is that people today know close to nothing about mythology, and the little they do know is totally meaningless. Usually they know some names that are separated from their true reality. And these names are usually of material nature. Names that for one thousand to two thousand years were connected with what the most respected and dignified people knew about. Names that filled them with courage and strength, the power of life and meaning now used as advertisement. The names of the originally dignified goddesses Frigg and Frøya mean little today. But everyone wants Frigg's oatmeal and Frøya's chocolate. The same is true for Glitnes life insurance, Idun's vinegar, Tjalve's sportsmen, Njord's tennis players, Hercules' suspenders, Heimdall's toilet paper, and Janus' bathing trunks. No one cares for Hermes, the messenger of the gods, but they go to Hermes Travel Bureau. The ancient names of gods have a certain, unconscious attraction and therefore they are used in advertisements. This is unbelievably disrespectful of something that in the past was very serious and valuable. Is it our right to be disrespectful?

Our civilization is naturally the highest that human beings have ever created in terms of technical advancement. And we are close to considering this most important. We can satisfy ourselves with our technical progress until we discover that every technical advancement entails a difficulty that must be overcome in a social context. When we look at the social context, there is very little reason to be arrogant and self-confident. When we look at which human forces arise between people, we must put aside the habit of calling it superstitious or unimportant. Rather we ask: What is that? Which forces in mankind brought this about? Then we discover that something other than superstition and random, fantastical images live in the ancient mythologies.

Every time people look up to figures that are more powerful than they are, they touch the forces that are active in people, but also go beyond their little and limited humanness. That which goes beyond the individual is naturally not the same in every situation. They may be different forces, but no matter how the human and the godly may be, they cannot unfold directly and unrestricted in us. As long as we live, we continue to be certain people with certain personal interests, certain interests in food, warmth, comfort, health and power. All of these interests demand a large part of our forces. Tensions build up between the personal and the superpersonal forces that rise above the individual. We can decide: As of today I will end my lower, earthly, personal egotism. But that would be a pure illusion. We will continue to struggle for fulfillment of our personal needs. The question is whether or not we drown in our struggle. Can we work with such a strong superhuman power that we can carry out all of these efforts in such a way that the superhuman power can become stronger and clearer each day?

Let us concentrate these ideas in a picture. We observe a human being of earthly and heavenly origin: Hercules, born of an earthly mother, Alkmene, but by a heavenly father, Zeus. He receives the richest gifts of the heavenly gods. But he cannot use them limitlessly according to his own choice. From the time of his birth an insurmountable necessity accompanies him. He is not his own boss. He must serve the mean, earthly, weak and tyrannical King Eurystheus. When the powerful Hercules finds out that he, the exalted hero of heavenly origin, shall serve the weak Eurystheus, he becomes wild with rage, and in his blinding rage,

he kills his own wife and children. When he comes to his senses Hercules sees the consequences of his actions because he refused to take on the work he initially considered degrading.

Then he takes on the twelve superhuman, apparently impossible tasks that Eurystheus demands of him. It turns out that he is not degraded by these tasks. Eventually Hercules completes the work and goes about his life with new forces and skills, stronger and more alive than before. With every task, he overcomes and transforms a piece of his lower, insatiable human nature. For the most part they are wild, uncontrollable animals he is to defeat, capture alive or tame; such as the Nemean lion, the Lernean hydra, the Ceryneian buck or the Erymanthean boar. For each task Hercules completes, Eurystheus loses some of his power over Hercules. Finally only the heaviest and most difficult task remains: Hercules successfully enters the kingdom of death without losing his footing. Then Eurystheus has no more control over Hercules. Now Hercules can dwell and work among people as his own person., no longer the slave of Eurystheus.

In this way the god-like, superhuman forces begin to work in an individual. There is another side to this. The single person has powerful forces at his disposal, and they could be used to obtain benefits for himself. Individualizing the godly forces is like a robbery of the godly forces. Consequences were not avoided. We humans become tied to the massive, hard, earthly realities and slowly lose our powers.

Let us once again compact this reality into a picture, another picture in Greek mythology: Prometheus steals the fire that is originally the property of the gods and builds the foundation for human civilization. With all of our outer cultural progress and shining goods also come arrogance and hubris. Consequences were not avoided. Prometheus is fastened to the Caucasian cliffs and an eagle hacks at his liver. When asked if he will give in and stop being so arrogant, Prometheus does not comply. The punishment does not lead him to plead to be once again taken into the godly totality as a humbled, insignificant entity. He resists. He does not plead in tears to be released. He lets the eagle hack into his liver. There is no resolution to the conflict. What is the only path to agreement? It must be to conquer the hard, earthly necessity—the work of Hercules is completed.

We notice the truly triumphant Hercules arrives. He shoots the eagle and releases Prometheus. Now resolution may take place. And Prometheus receives the ring, the symbol of unity. Yet he does not disappear in the godly totality like a drop of water in the ocean. He has gone through the process of individualization. He has been fastened to the cliff. Now he carries forward a permanent value. This is symbolized in the stone in his ring.

In Greek mythology, in these inner pictures, whether they are godly figures or god-like human figures, we see beautiful, fantasy colors and forms. Yet this is no empty fantasy game. If we deepen our understanding of the mythological pictures, we discover that they are humanity's own hidden and best forces that form the pictures. These are the forces that rise above the little, single person and are therefore not only human but also the godly in human beings.

And in Greek mythology we find these forces very close to human beings. Let us look at one situation where these are expressed clearly. The Greek leaders Achilles and Agamemnon stand against each other. It appears the entire fortune of Greece will suffer when both leaders continue to fight. Massive rage envelops Achilles. He pulls his sharp sword from his side, send away the other leaders at the forum and is about to kill Agamemnon, but he does not get that far:

Then, as thoughts tumbled wildly in his mind and he uncontrollably attempted to pull his battle sword, swerved Athena down from the heavens.

As a messenger she was sent by the white-armed Hera;
for she was fond of both of them and loved them greatly in her heart.
Tall she stood behind the son of Peleus and touched his blond
curly hair, merely visible for him, but not for the other.
Astounded, Achilles turned and recognized in outrage,
Pallas Athena; whose eye-glance is seldom seen.
Wondering, sounded his winged-word as he spoke and asked:
“Daughter of Zeus, why do you come here swiftly?
Except that you see for yourself the anger of Agamemnon's arrogant
violence?
Yet, I will tell you a word and it will certainly be true:

Perhaps his insulting arrogance will soon cost him his life.”
Then spoke the blue-eyed Goddess Athena:
“Know that I swerved down from heaven to soothe your rage,
if you give it up. The white-armed Hera sent me a message,
for she is fond of you both and loves you highly in her heart.
Stop the conflict, follow her message and do not pull the sword!
Cover him with angry words as much as you like.
One thing I certainly promise you and my promise shall be fulfilled.
Once you will receive, in return for all of the injustice you suffer,
threefold gifts.
So force yourself to do as I ask you.”
Immediately Achilles, the lost hero, spoke and answered:
“High goddess, a plea from you I should certainly follow,
fill it may the most bitter harm in my soul, it is the best.
He who accepts the message of the gods, will you listen to.”
Grasping the handle of silver with his powerful fist,
Thrusting the mighty sword back in the sheath, he followed
Obediently Athena’s advice; while she returned to Olympus
To the aegis-winged goddess’ castle where the gods meet.

The light of Pallas Athena’s brilliant power shines directly into Achilles’ uncontrolled, chaotic rage. The goddess Pallas Athena is just as real as the human Achilles, or more correctly stated: She is more real, her light conquers his rage. She acts with her godly power near individual humans. Yet is this light something that is characteristic only of Pallas Athena? Do we not find this light wherever humans look up to the godly above them?

Is this light characteristic of the Persian god Ahura Mazdao, the sun god in successful battles against all of the spirits of darkness that are lead by the evil Ahriman? So it is. Light is also the characteristic for that god. We immediately see the decisive difference between him and Pallas Athena. He does not stand near the hero and touch his blond curls. Ahura Mazdao is the great, all-encompassing god of light that shines and weaves in all of the light of the world. It would be a rude blasphemy against Ahura Mazdao to place him equally with Pallas Athena; he is of much higher rank.

And is it not hedonistic and unchristian to speak of different gods as if they were realities? There is only one God, you may believe. The various gods are human pictures, people say. That is true. You would have to be dumb if you tried to refuse any human limitations in imagining all of the different figures of gods.

Here it is important not to think halfway and lazily. We discover that the same applies for the one and only God. Both *one* and description *many* are limited human descriptions. The truly godly cannot be grasped and held fast by either the description “one” or the description “many.” Rather, it reveals itself and lives, and it can reveal itself and live in both descriptions. When we study the various folk mythologies, we discover monotheism with one God actually only by the Semites, the Jews and the Arabs, and by others who are clearly influenced by the Semites or belong to them. In all of the Aryan mythologies there is polytheism, many gods of different rank. How do the Christians and the Evangelic Christians relate to this? They are neither one-sided, Aryan-polytheistic nor Semite-monotheistic. They have both elements. There is the almighty God. Yet He is three: God the Father, God the Son, and the God Holy Ghost. And they have a lot of beings below them in three times three kingdoms of angels, hierarchies in which the angels are the lowest rank, those that stand closest to human beings.

So we can we ask: Which rank is Pallas Athena in the Christian hierarchy? We have already seen that she has direct contact with human beings. Therefore she has the same rank and the same activity as an angel.

How does Norse mythology relate to all of this? Just as with Greek and other Aryan mythology, we find great diversity that is richly developed. The *aesens* are a series of different figures that either stand close to human beings or farther apart. There is not a single God, the one and only God. Therefore it is characteristically polytheistic, yet we cannot deny that unity is there. We do not discover it with a superficial effort. The unity is found in the structure of the dramatic actions.

The world is created from the unified, undifferentiated, original place, Ginnungagap. But the unity is divided into opposite worlds: the cold Niflheim and the warm, life-exuding Muspelheim, the opposites that appear everywhere, for example in the human being’s life-exuding warmth and passionate life of will and in the more loving understanding in the

head. Yet these opposites are not indivisible without communication. From the warm Muspelheim arises the huge, life-giving, milkcow, Audhumla. Yet it would like to approach the cold Niflheim to lick the salt from the stones there. From the cold Niflheim arises the ice troll Ymir. He would like to have the forces of life from the warm Audhumla and he drinks milk from her. From the opposing worlds arise new generations. And from a final connection between these world's generations, Borr and Bestla, arise Odin, Vili and Ve. This "trinity" gives up their positions for the new: Odin, Lodur and Honir. Lodur has most of Muspelheim's burning flames in him, Honir has most of Niflheim's coldness, while Odin lives between them as a harmonious representative.

With a direct quotation from the older *Edda (Voluspaa)*, I would like to support that this is not a random interpretation. It is a description directly from oldest Norse mythology. The two opposite worlds, Niflheim and Muspelheim, are especially represented by Honir and Lodur while Odin communicates both qualities. Also they are directly related to the warm, human forces of will on one side and the brain-oriented reasoning (*aathug*) on the other side. The communication takes place in a rhythmical breathing process:

*Aande gav Odin,
Aathug Honir,
Let fager Lodur
og livsens varme.*

In English according to the meaning:

Odin gave the breath of consciousness,
Honir gave us reason
That lit up the colorful Lodur
And the warmth of life.

The immediate impressions one receives of Old Norse mythology are of grotesque and fantastical figures. As we have seen in this article, these fantasies are anything but empty and random. They address central realities in human beings. This is also true of other figures in Aasgaard.

Yet these gods who continuously fight against the dark forces of evil are not omnipotent in their battles. Their fight with evil is not the ever-successful fight the Persians experienced in their mythology. The mighty God of Light, Ahura Mazdao wins no matter what. There is never the slightest possibility for the god of darkness, Ahriman, not to be completely defeated. Norse mythology is very different. Here the battle is wide open from the very start. And we have a dark feeling that it will end in tragedy. The Aesens have evil beings living among them and also as their friends. They have a painful and trying destiny that leads to destruction.

But not all Aesens are that way. Balder is pure. Balder shines. He brings peace and joy wherever he goes in the worlds of the gods and the human beings. In Balder's pure light lives the human being's direct, original, nature-given connection with the divine. Wherever Balder's light forces shine, the dark shadows on the earth disappear.

Yet also Balder is dragged into the destruction of the world. By Loki's evil deception he is shot by the blind Hod. And Balder must enter the kingdom of death, Hel, where he can no longer bring light and joy. Is he gone forever? Will Balder return with new light?

The world darkens. Evil is set free and takes control. Human beings lose their direct contact with the divine. The world enters corruption and destruction:

*Hardt I heimen
Hordom kaldleg,
Oeks-old, sverd-old,
Skjoldar klovna,
Vindold, varg-old,
Fyrr Verdi stuper,
Grunnen gjallar,
Gygrar fljugande.*

In English according to the meaning:

Life is heavy and difficult in our homes.
Coldness and hardness abound.
Battle axes and swords

Smash our shields to pieces.
The wind is fired up, the wolves are fired up.
The world is going down.
The ground is shaking.
The troll woman flies.

In this way Norse mythology lives in a dramatic tension that has the human being's inner life drama at its core. Balder is gone. The evil forces attack everywhere, and it appears they will control the forces of goodness. Will Balder return? When children are allowed to experience the full power of Norse mythology in its totality, drama and colors, they understand its entire depth and broad perspective. With their whole being they can live with this mythology because its origin is the origin of the human being. The question of whether Balder will return becomes their question. I was pressured by my students to explain in advance whether he will return: "Will Balder return? Just tell me! Will he come back?" And finally, after Ragnarok, when the old world is destroyed, the new world shines forth and Balder appears." Yes, that is what I knew!" cries one of the children triumphantly.

By the same token when we allow our children to live with Norse mythology without conceptual explanations but with direct observation, they will never ask, for example: "Is Odin real?" They will ask: "Is Odin alive now?" I had never received such a question before. And I had no answer ready from a list of education directives on what teachers should say in such a situation. But I knew immediately that I could not say yes. That would have been a lie to say that the life reality that Odin once was still exists today. And I realized immediately that also I could not say no. For the old life reality that was Odin is absolutely not destroyed. It continues to work in hidden, transformed shapes. But what should I answer? To truly answer the question I would have to tell the entire historical development from then through today. Then will the answer appear. So I answered: "We will see. We have not reached that part of the story quite yet." This answer was absolutely beyond my calculations as a schoolmaster. Immediately a new impulse appeared in the class as one of the children demanded intensely: "You will tell us the whole story until today, right?" In this way a historical expectation can arise, the element in life for experiencing history as an adult or a child.

When is the right time in education to bring Norse mythology? In grades one and two everything happens outside of time: Something happened. When did it happen? Once upon a time. This is how we tell stories from the past to children at the ages of seven or eight. They do not experience it in the present tense. To be more accurate, they do not experience any development in time.

In the third grade main lesson block in “local living,” the element of time appears. Then children experience the past: our grandparent’s age and our great-grandparent’s age. They experience how life unfolded in earlier times. This initial experience of time is actually no more than a feeling for time, rather than an active, deep experience of a development in time.

So, in grades one, two and three lessons are in a cohesive sphere of feelings. From a complete and outside world their individual willpower is first awakened in a serious way in the fourth grade. That is when Norse mythology is appropriate with all of its willpower-oriented drama. Also Norse kings and heroes appear. And from this element history lessons are born. In the fifth grade world history appears.

Mythology is not a superficial game of fantasy at the Waldorf school. And it is not presented so children can learn the mythological names. Rather Norse mythology is a necessary means for educating children at a certain point in time, namely grade four.





Thinking and Willing in Mythological Form

by

Jørgen Smit

Once we have lived awhile with the Northern Germanic mythology and then approach the mythology of Ancient Greece, it is like entering a totally new world. A new room opens and we experience a new situation in life. Here the entire world speaks differently to us and the human beings are quite different.

Parallels are not hard to find. We can look for the “God of Thunder” and the “God of Love.” We can find the “God of War” and the “Dragon Killer.” We find twelve fortresses in Asgard and twelve gods on Olympus. Are they the same?

We may answer both yes and no. Both mythologies serve the same functions. This is objective. But we notice great differences at first sight. The styles are very different. The feelings for life and the experience of space are also very different. There are no figures in Greek mythology that are the same in Northern Germanic mythology—not one single god or goddess, not one single nymph, nor any events are the same. What are the peculiarities of these separate worlds?

In Norse mythology the gods are in a continual battle for their existence. Their enemies are in their midst and are preparing to bring them down. The largest, final battle is approaching from the future. The great downfall, Ragnarok, lies ahead, i.e., a complete world revolution wherein the old ways are destroyed forever. The forces of good are victorious while a new and transformed world arises. In the present and future battle human beings appear as very small, but important beings. Human beings take

part in the battles. They are the gods' irreplaceable helpers. When a brave hero dies, he continues to fight and he continually practices for the global downfall. There is a weapon noise in Valhalla during life after death. What a world of will! What a display of courage in battle that goes through bone and marrow. They storm forward in the Valkyries' ride and challenge to battle for the victory of goodness in the future.

This is very different in Hellas. Do not the Olympic gods fight? Yes, they do but only in certain situations. They have completed their great battle for existence. The Titans and the Giants are defeated for a long time to come. The great, dangerous battle lies in the past. In glorious, majestic peace the Olympic gods look upon a world of clear, sun-filled beauty.

And what do people in Hellas do after death? Do they fight on? After death people are partially reduced to helpless shadows that can do nothing. They would be a liability in a global war. Like bats they fly around the dark shadows of Hades. Only the initiated in the mysteries of Hellas pass through the world of shadows after death to an enlightened life in the godly light of knowledge upon the fields of Elysium, where they take part in the harmonious existence of the Olympic gods, facing no threatening global catastrophes. For them it would be completely alien to take part in the rides of the Valkyries.

To get there the initiates go through the most difficult trials and battles, much like Hercules and other heroes. But these trials are purifications on the path to the heights of Olympus.

A people's mythology is a powerful tapestry of pictures at its "birth," at its entrance into "history." In these pictures we recognize the entire situation of the people.

For the Germanic-Norse people, culture becomes a continual battle for existence. In Hellas, culture unfolds after the battles for existence. I will not provide a superficial, "cause and effect explanation." It is not so simple. It is more accurate to say that we find the entire people's being and uniqueness in their history, their cultural life and in the mythical world of their gods. The style is the same. The being is the same. The opportunities for human beings are the same.

The style of the Germanic-Norse world is the eternal expansion of will power, the Faustian person's journey to new knowledge, new inventions, new discoveries and conquests, in never-ending battles for existence and

in continual confrontation with evil powers with which they have forged an alliance. It is a battle of willpower for future possibilities.

After a final battle for existence, the world according to the Greeks appears in its beauty and abundance, with art and science. Like never before, summarized observations of the riddles of the world appear in philosophy as clear, plentiful thoughts. It is the mature fruit of wisdom and beauty in harmonious peace.

In the Norse mythology wolves chase and threaten to swallow the sun and the moon: uncertain existence. In Hellas the sun-wagon's journey may be problematic if an immature and arrogant being (Phaeton) holds the reins. But Helios is safe.

In the Germanic-Norse world nature is filled with seductive, borderless, secretive, ugly and clinging beings: nixies, sea monsters, mermaids, nymphs and trolls. They live in nature and act beyond it. In Hellas nature is also filled with beings but in a totally different way. Streams, springs, trees and bushes are physical and super-physical forms with harmonious identity. While the Norse nixie lives in the river, the Greek god of rivers is the river itself. It merely depends whether or not he appears in his true form. Nature is close and well known. There is nothing foreign. The Greeks prefer geometry and whole numbers. They have an indestructible fear and scorn for the irrational, for whatever does not result in clear and observable proportions. Therefore the Greeks portrayed their gods in accurate clarity with sculptural, beautiful completion. So appears Pallas Athena. So is Father Zeus.

In the Norse-Germanic world there is an obvious preference for what is not "complete," for the unclarified and non-observable picture. Everything that points to the endless future awakens an intense interest. With red-hot glow they throw themselves into studies of the irrational numbers, of the tremendously minute and the endlessly large. Passion for analyzing the infinite is just as characteristic of the Nordic human being as the simple, clear and beautiful proportions are characteristic for the Greeks. The Nordic human beings always aspire further. They would like to drop the search for "truth in knowledge" if it demands a clear, observable picture and if there is an advantage for the roaring dynamics of will, where something shall be conquered by power and where something shall happen. There is something reckless over the obvious with which

they take on the most terrible damage for the sake of moving forward. They are aligned with evil. Here there is no possibility for a “solution in thinking.” The solution must take place in willful actions that overcome evil and transform in the future. In summary:

- The entire Norse-Germanic mythology is WILL condensed in dramatic pictures.
- The entire Greek mythology is THINKING in clarified harmony and within full but multiple forms.

If a teacher is clear concerning these styles and the forces of being in the human soul, he has the key to use these mythological worlds of pictures at the best time possible in primary school education. In the first three grades, individual children pass so well into the life and rhythm of the class that they prosper within a “group-soul.” Naturally there are children who stick out and “do not want to get involved.” But in those cases there is always something in the way. Either the teaching is unsuccessful or the child is struggling.

The fourth grade is very different. Here it is just the opposite. If the children do not stick out, one after the other, then there is something wrong. This happens in numerous ways. The strongest child may now appear as the gentlest. All of the children want to feel individual, totally alone and to meet the adults and the whole world one-on-one rather than as part of a group. The child’s personal will sparkles forth from its innermost depth. The child wants to be acknowledged as the individual human being he or she truly is. He or she makes plans and takes on new tasks rather than following the others. From a general sphere of feelings, where the child is one with nature and the grownups’ world, young Vikings appear with personal swords of will. And they not only do good deeds. They are drawn to try out bad ways, at least a little. For them it is very understandable that Odin and Thor create a mutual alignment with the impish Loki. The element of dramatic willpower in Norse mythology is inevitable. Evil shall be conquered. Yet evil is not a distant and foreign power. It is close to home and demands personal efforts of will.

If the children step powerfully into this flaming zone of willpower in the fourth grade, the teacher can observe that their soul abilities appear in a new way. They awaken to a new day. It is now possible to observe and understand forms with clarification.

Earlier content had to be wrapped inside a series of actions in order to be understood. Now the content can appear on its own. For example, we can approach botany with all of the plant's changes in form in relation to the earth and the environment. Plants can be ordered in groups to further understanding. Soon afterwards we begin with geometric constructions within its strict laws.

During the fifth grade, Greek mythology is excellent for storytelling at any time. From there we enter Greek history, where mythology disappears and individual personalities appear: Themistokles, Aristeides, Perikles and Alkibiades. As thoughts are clarified, they arise from rich life forces that are forced aside, behind and below the child. If the head is to be ready to understand clear thoughts, it must be lifted out of the purely vegetative digestion processes. So it is in the Greek myths as well.

While the Olympic, "clear thoughts" gods rule above in the atmosphere's light and air, the "lower" gods rule below, within the earth's richness, in the field's sprouting life, in the animals' and human beings' births and growth, nutrition and prosperity. It is Demeter and Persephone and all the other "lower" gods. Being lower does not mean that they are less important. It relates to direct orientation in space. The Greek wanders across the Earth with sprouting life and his own digestion "down below." And he looks up to the mountains and clouds and feels within his own head a certain relationship with the heavenly, Olympic gods. There is no static, dead separation. It streams continually from the bottom up (*ano*), and it continually streams from above to down below (*kato*). These two gestures are fundamental. The "lower" gods can reach to the Olympic mountaintops, and the Olympic gods can climb down to the Earth.

Pallas Athena was born by springing out of the forehead of Zeus. The goddess of wisdom, the virgin that had no children can enter at any time practically and proficiently into all situations in life, combining wisdom with sharp observations and quick thoughts here and now. At the same time she is the goddess of technique and craftsmanship. Even though she represents the "upper" Olympic gods more than any other, she has a darker past as the "lower" goddess of fertility. Her clear human face came later after spending a long time in the shape of an animal—the owl. The owl became her symbol. She left the dark of night and was transformed as free and moving wisdom, to be completely accepted by the Olympic gods.

This harmonious, balanced foundation between the upper and the lower, between heaven and earth, between the head's thoughts and the stomach's digestion may be found again in the style of Greek temples. There is no tower striving to reach heaven. There is equilibrium between the supporting and the resting, between the lower and the higher: The columns support the architrave with a slightly sloping gable. The triangle rests above the rectangle. Heaven and earth are in a golden equilibrium. And the Greek experienced himself within both the equilibrium and the column's supporting power. In the Temple of Erechtheon on the Acropolis we see the Karyatides, beautiful female figures that are the supporting columns of the temple.

Greek mythology is the "thinking mythology," the birth of thinking and liberation. And that means that the mystical pictures in the consciousness of the Greek people rapidly transformed into thought forms. Each god has his area, his function, and his unique qualities. And soon we see how their interest changes from the being to the activity of the being. Poseidon, the ruler of the waters, becomes the flowing function of water, the water itself. Hades becomes the hard earth. Kronos becomes the all-encompassing fire or the all-encompassing time (chronometer). And Father Zeus, the god of thinking, light and air, who allows lightning to strike, lights up the heavens, allows people to become conscious, upright, thinking beings, eventually transforms into the air's function as well as the function of thinking. He allows everything to become visible, he becomes the space-creating function.

But where is the uniting force between all of these figures? In Greek mythology there is not a single unitary form, but it is hidden within the harmonious collaboration among the multiple figures. Just as thinking works in all specific thoughts, the godly "unity" lives in all of the godly figures. It is typical of the Greek people that they are interested in multiple forms, in the specific figures that are autonomous in their own areas. They are satisfied with one quality and have no need to return to the original form or a unified goal.

This is very different from the Jewish monotheism where all interest is directed to the One. The multiple forms in Jewish mythology are in the Old Testament: angels, archangels, cherubim, and seraphim. But these are messengers and subordinate servants in relation to the One Who was so

holy you should not say His name. In Hellas the monotheistic tendency is in the background. It appears occasionally. Without the multiple, different, beautiful and visible gods, all thinking is reduced to repetition of a single postulate. Nothing particular appears.

The Greek gods have the same all-sided differences as the human senses. What is the point of thinking if you do not have eyes, ears, taste, the sense of warmth, the sense of movement, and so forth? Just as different as sight and hearing are Pallas Athena's sharp sight and Phoebus Apollo's harmonizing, sweet-sounding lyre. Just as different as the sense of warmth and the sense of movement (the sense for your own body's movements) are the goddess of love, Aphrodite, and the wild, war-dancing Ares.

Just as all of the qualities of senses can be reduced conceptually to the general, that which is sensed, so all of the gods can be reduced to the "godly" or to "God." If you do not do this, they disappear in the totality. If you do only this, they become lost in the multiple figures.

Greek philosophy is also multi-sided. Most of the thoughts that have appeared in the history of philosophy may be found in one or another Greek philosopher. That is how rich and differentiated Greek thinking became. And if we turn to the greatest Greek philosopher of all, Aristotle, we find this to be particularly strong. Of course he knew of the thinking activity that lives in all thoughts. Yes, he tried to link our attention to this core activity in thinking, *noesis* (*noeseos*). Yet most of all he sought, with the fresh enthusiasm of an explorer, all of the multiple differences within areas. That brought him to the ten main categories: substance, quality, quantity, place, time, active, passive, relations, habits, position. These are the Aristotelian philosophy's Mount Olympus.

These categories are just as sovereign and different as the Olympic gods' distinctive characters and their areas of activity. Yet they work together. None can exist without the other. Father Zeus is the most powerful, the father of many other gods and goddesses. And these, in turn, have sons and daughters that are likewise independent and sovereign within their areas. So it is also with the substance category as the most important, king and ruler among categories, Father Zeus himself. A number of the other categories can be directly "drawn" from the substance category. Once substance occurs or displays itself, the category of place immediately springs from its forehead. But they are not totally alike. The

category of place is nothing without substance, yet once substance appears the entire place orientation appears as a special area. You can concentrate on a single category and experience everything from that one “area.” Then you are involuntarily moved to one of the other areas. Just as you can wander upon the Greek Olympus to different gods and also experience them together with Ares, Pallas Athena, Artemis or Phoebus Apollo, so can you also wander around the Aristotelian world of thought to the various categories’ areas and peculiarities, and experience the world from each area: active, place, time, relation, and so forth.

The people of Greece’s childhood had the Olympic gods. The people of Greece’s adult age have the categories of Aristotle. And the entire world-historic development brings together the Greek people’s mythology, history and philosophy in a higher unity, as part of mankind’s evolution.





A Little Introduction to Grammar

by

Jørgen Smit

For many people the word *grammar* leaves a clear taste in their mouths. For others, and unfortunately for many, the word gives a very different feeling, such as struggling to cut bread with a dull knife and ending up with five unsuccessful, half-destroyed pieces on the table. Then you find a sharp knife and cut the bread in whole pieces, each the right size.

When grammar is experienced individually and discovered by the child, there will always be some of the “knife-sharp” triumphant feeling attached to it. But when the study of grammar is a superficial, formalistic learning process, it is merely sand and remains sand. When sand arrives in the wrong place and in overabundance, it creates direct pain. And grammar is never so simple as merely appearing as “sand” or as a “sharp knife.” For the knife at first is pretty dull for everyone and must be sharpened within. Sharpening grammar occurs inside the child—and there something must always be sharpened away!

If we were to leave discovering grammar up to growing children, there would be no grammar ground at all. And that problem would be removed from the face of the earth. Or, alternatively, almost no one would participate in grammar. Probably one in a million pioneers of grammar would not only learn the subject from others but also discover entirely new areas of grammar. And the remaining 999,999 would know nothing of grammar at all. We would be left with unconscious grammar, only the rules of our spoken language. For when we speak, that is what takes place.

But we would know nothing of the rules. And why should we know? For, indeed, in order to speak, it is not necessary to know grammar. Young children do not know grammar, yet they speak fluently. By copying someone who speaks correctly, we can learn to speak correctly without consciously knowing any grammar. And it is possible to learn to speak a foreign language fully without any grammar at all. Should grammar be just a “crutch” with which we quickly learn to speak correctly? Or could it help us learn a foreign language when we do not have the opportunity to learn it directly?

In other words: What value does grammar have on its own merit? Does it have something that every person should participate in? What takes place in grammar? It is reflection. It sharpens our self-consciousness, and consciousness of the Self is increased. This is grammar’s true value for the human being, no matter how many meaningful but secondary practical goals it has: speaking correctly, learning a foreign language, and answering exam questions correctly.

Without “consciousness-searching” reflection, words stream into our speech without our noticing how different the words are. There is a world of difference between the word’s inherent character and the tension that exists between words. An artistically trained ear knows words by their sound and rhythm and is able to grasp the special character of the words and speech with feeling and in pictures. In grammar the conscious reflection is sharpened so that the character and tension of each word is described directly. Yet how easily the enlivened word disappears and one is left with only a dead scheme, a fishing net with no living fish. That is when the dry taste of sand appears. This is where the grammar teacher’s hidden challenge lies.

Is it possible to help the child experience even a little bit of the self-discovering, consciousness-sharpening of grammar? Or will grammar lessons irrefutably drown in the sand dunes? Today’s school systems have set the bar for examinations such that the teacher must practice grammar drills with the students as a pure formality. Until the school systems are revised, there will certainly remain a lot of sand in the grammar lessons. But that does not prevent us teachers from continually bringing to the children as much of grammar’s purely humanly educational activity as possible.

Let us illustrate this with a certain part of speech—verbs or “action words”: *run, hop, sing, hammer, knit, bathe, crawl*, and *saw*. When these verbs follow each other and we try to experience inside ourselves what lives within them, there is a strong activity, a characteristic movement. A lot is happening. They are truly “action words.”

But stop a moment. Are not the following words equally verbs: *sleep, rest, lie*, and *sit*? Here the movement is gone and there is not a lot happening. If we speak about “action words,” we must ask: Is there something even more characteristic of verbs, something held in common with words such as *run, hop, sing* and words such as *sleep, rest* and *sit*?

And let us consider the so-called dependent words: *are* and *become*. What is going on there? The expression “action word” is a good description for many verbs, maybe for most of the verbs, but not for all verbs. What do all verbs share in common and what is most characteristic of them? It is the moment of will, “I will” or “I will not”: I will *bathe*, I will *sleep*, I will *be* courageous, I will *lie* down, I will *hop* and I will *be* strong. A most exact description of all verbs is, therefore, “words of will” or “will-words.” One might argue that this concerns only what conscious beings do, while we have many verbs that belong to non-conscious nature: the river *roars*, the sun *shines*, it *grows*, it *storms*. We may not say: I want to roar. I will shine. I will grow. Yet the moment of willpower is also there. The being that wills is much larger and more powerful.

Language arose in a time when human beings experienced natural phenomena as the actions of powerful spiritual beings. For example, they did not merely say, “It rains,” but rather, “Zeus rains.” And all verbs of nature were expressions for the intentions of these beings. The fact that people nowadays no longer relate to such beings does not prevent the verbs we use from having willpower.

With verbs of nature we can better identify with nature than with substantives or nouns. Nouns are very different from verbs: *table, head, foot, flower, sun, moon, animal, stone, beauty*, and *wisdom*. Here we find absolute steadiness compared with the verb’s willful activities. Everything, every single being, every relationship has its name. “Name words” is an expression that covers all nouns. They are the part of speech that provides pictures of thoughts. While verbs carry us away to experience the actions as if we created them (*run, hop, roar, storm*), the nouns are more readily

pale, completed, finalized pictures that are viewed from the outside and at a distance, for example: *house, tree, forest, ship, and sky*.

Of course there may be movement in a noun: *river, lightning, storm, car race* or even the word *movement*. But in all of these words, the movement lies within the meaning and not in the words' function as nouns. Therefore the moment of movement is dulled, the movement is considered a completed picture. On the contrary, with verbs we go into intension of the movement and enter the inside of the action: "Lightning" is duller than "It is lightning." "Storm" is much duller than "It is storming." If we say, "There are flags in town and at sea," we have the picture of a celebration although a pretty stiff and complacent one. If we say with Bjornson, "They are flagging in towns and at sea," immediately the flags flap courageously in the wind and people celebrate in the streets.

With verbs we enter the stream of time. Verbs have many tenses. They live and weave in time while nouns are static. Nouns are either plural or single but there are no tenses. With nouns we define the tenses in the present, past and future. Once again these are finalized pictures of the tenses.

Verbs and nouns are polar opposites in language, much as willpower and thinking are in our life of soul, much like our body's movements and its static structure. If we imagine language with no nouns, it would roar off chaotically, driven by passionate impulses without clarified stability. If we imagine language without verbs, we would have a dead moon landscape clarified and stable, but without the living and moving element.

Between these polarities we find a third part of speech—adjectives: *courageous, smart, green, red, sour, sharp, pointed, heavy, slippery, sleepy, jumpy, defeated and lost*. With adjectives, name and action do not count. These words express the experience of how things and every being are and how those beings are that lives with the activities of the verbs. Adjectives commute between nouns and verbs and facilitate between them. "A man does his duty and sacrifices his life for the cause." With nouns and verbs we can express a relationship clearly and dramatically. Yet even if the issue appears clearly and no matter how intense the dynamic actions may be within the verbs, the language remains hardened, unresolved, and immature if some of the living atmosphere does not appear: "Oh, how brave he is!" and this appears in the adjectives. For all

of them it depends on saying: “Oh, how —”! Adjectives are expressions of feelings and impressions. And as far as feelings and impressions (all of our senses) are organs for experiencing how the world truly is, the true qualities appear in adjectives. Normally we call adjectives “feature words,” which is a dry noun expression for this relationship. Adjectives span a large area. They may express impressions that are provided by a specific sensory organ: *green, yellow, blue, sour, sweet, slippery, warm* and *cold*. They may be subjective so that we learn more about the person who is speaking and not so much about the matter at hand. Regardless, the objective quality usually dominates when adjectives are used.

The adjectives that are much more apt to have a subjective quality are those in which the impressions are not provided by a specific sensory organ but rather by the entire human being who acts as an organ for feelings: He is a *quirky* person, a *polite* man, and so forth. But with all adjectives an impression or a feeling is expressed. Within the mood that lives in adjectives, the verb’s intense activity is reduced, while at the same time the noun’s clarified steadiness is enlivened. Adjectives create a harmonizing element in the language, much like feelings express and harmonize thinking and willing in the life of soul and much the way in which rhythmical processes express and harmonize the structure of the body and its movements.

And if the teacher finds text in which verbs and adjectives are presented with artistic certainty, the students can learn more about the specific qualities of verbs and adjectives than in any thick grammar book with schemes of conceptual distinctions.

Just as important as separating the specific qualities of the words of speech is to find the transitions by which a word is transformed from one part of speech to the next:

It darkens. The night is dark. Dark night. The dark.

It lightens. The day is light. Light day. Daylight.

It greens. The fields are green. Green fields. The green.

The farther we remove ourselves from lively verbs to nouns, the more our consciousness becomes sharper and clearer. Nouns are the part of speech for reflective and intelligent self-consciousness. This is where all

knowledge of things is kept. Everything becomes objective, becomes the object for observation and thus limited in relation to other objects. Even grammar and all of its descriptions, explanations, examples and rules is stuffed with nouns.

To speak in pictures we can say that verbs are like wild, lively children. Nouns are like old, wise, but unmovable men. Adjectives have both qualities harmonized: They are mature people. Such pictures can be further developed and used in the first stage of grammar lessons, as I will soon demonstrate.

Grammar lessons are not relevant until the fourth grade or at roughly the age of nine or ten. Before the fourth grade the teacher can bring many word exercises and comparisons as a preparation for grammar, but before the age of nine or ten, it should not be addressed consciously. At that age most children arrive at a moment of self-development and self-consciousness they have not achieved previously. Often this occurs during small conflicts with adults. One can often see how they unconsciously search for opportunities to misbehave and not listen to others. Through these confrontations they awaken to a clearer experience of their own selves. This is when it is appropriate to begin grammar lessons. For the same desire for confrontation and awakening can be resolved in a sharpening of self-consciousness.

The goal is to let the children discover on their own as much of the grammar as possible. We teachers guide them to create their own sharpening and awakening, using grammar as the subject. Here is one way of doing it:

The teacher speaks with the children about how young children learn to speak. Almost no one remembers anything from that moment in their lives when they learned to speak. Yet everyone has seen others do it, be they siblings or the neighborhood children. Everyone has witnessed how young children struggle to get the words out. Now in the tenth year words are spoken without even noticing the separate words. Speech flows in a stream all by itself. Some children cannot help but speak. This is what we review in the initial fourth grade grammar lessons. We look at how the words are different, as different as a wild young child and a wise old man who knows everything but his legs are too weak so he sits in a wheel chair. As vividly and dramatically as possible the teacher tells the story of

everything the little, wild boy does and allows him to repeatedly say, "I will" for every new action he undertakes. "I will climb! I will climb!" – "I will chop! I will chop!" This brings all kinds of verbs into play without mentioning the grammatical term. Then one event follows the other, where the little boy courageously carries out great, boy-like activities and when sometimes he also recklessly causes huge amounts of damage.

His mother, Solveig, observes everything and praises him every time his good sides appear saying: "Oh, how strong, how brave, how talented!" and so on. And she is on the verge of desperation when he loses control and destroys: "Oh how ugly, how wild, how terrible!" The adjectives appear without labeling them grammatically.

And then we lead the children to the old grandfather in the wheelchair who calms the boy down and explains to him: "That is a stool. That is an axe." Now we present nouns without labeling them grammatically. The teacher asks the children, "Can you find the words that are similar to those spoken by the wild boy, his mother Solveig, and the old grandfather?"

Such a picturesque, riddle-like story allows the children to find their own examples of verbs, adjectives and nouns without labeling them grammatically and without using explanations to define them, but all the while clearly holding all three parts of speech separate from each other.

Of course this picturesque story can be told much better than I have indicated here briefly. Use your imagination in the first grammar lesson but keep it simple, powerful and make sure it works for all the children in the class, for the children who think quickly and for those who think more slowly. My experience when I used this example was successful, for not one bad example appeared!

When the children find examples from the story, we can begin to put the words in order, write them on the board and into their books. And then we need to find expressions for all three types of words. What should the boy be named? And what should we name the words that belong to him? "Wild," said one child. "Call him Will," said another. And so we called the words "will words." And what can we call the grandfather? "Call him 'Name,' for he names all of the things." We now had the "name words." And the third type of words, the adjectives, we called the "Solveig words" after the mother. (The teacher can enable this realization if the children do not.) The "Solveig words" are then grouped in addition to a number

of adverbs the children naturally add. (But I recommend to delay a distinction between adjectives and adverbs until later.)

When the children discover so much grammar in one lesson, we have achieved the first level of learning. During the many lessons that follow, we repeat, expand and practice the same level. Once it is learned and digested by the children, they can draw examples from the story in their workbooks and add text to the drawings with columns of words. We find examples for all three parts of speech so that all three words fit meaningfully into sentences. Then we find the transitions from part of speech to part of speech as I indicated earlier in this article. Also when the class reads great writing, we can now point out the parts of speech.

Grammar workbooks in which everything is given in advance, and all you need to do is understand and remember without discovering it for yourself, can be very good at a later level in order to provide a systematic overview and practice. But at this early level it is important that grammar lessons follow three phases:

1. Experiencing the grammatical qualities in a story and allowing the children to find their own examples. We can call this the “willpower phase” of the lessons.
2. What has been experienced and carried out is repeated, practiced and thoroughly worked upon. The children learn to breathe in it. We can call this the “feeling phase” of the lessons.
3. What has been learned in the first two phases is crystallized in a clear and controlled relationship, preferably in an accurate drawing. This is the lesson’s “thinking phase.”

After the third phase is completed, it is worth introducing the actual Latin-based grammatical expressions, verbs, nouns, adjectives, and so forth. Of course such teaching demands well-planned and -timed lessons in the main lessons every morning for a certain period with the same subject a couple of weeks at a time. This allows the children to concentrate on the topic and allows the teacher to present a comprehensive development in less time.

If your children have completed the first and easiest awakening to a sharpened consciousness in grammar lessons, the path is clearer for other

areas of grammar. Therefore the first grammar lessons are especially important. For every new area the teacher plows up, a new, intense effort must be made. Nothing rolls along on its own, if it should support human development.

After all three main parts of speech are worked on at the same time (for they belong together), each one must be deepened separately. The teacher quickly discovers that the children find more good examples for nouns and verbs than for adjectives. Children near the age of ten use very few adjectives! Vocabulary increases as the children mature, and this is especially the case with adjectives. Except for the most common adjectives used with our senses (e.g., *red, green, sharp, dull, slippery*), most children at this age use only a few adjectives such as *good* and *bad* (to use some expressions from Bergen, Norway), actually words that express sympathy and antipathy.

Of course they understand many more words than they actually use. And their active adjective vocabulary grows quickly when we help them a little, in other words, whenever we awaken something that is asleep in them. Now we can move from sensory area to sensory area, from adjectives of sight (*red, green, light, dark*) to taste adjectives (*sour, sweet*) and on to adjectives of touch (*slippery, sticky*) and finally to areas that are not connected to certain senses, but which we experience and feel with our entire being (*brave, friendly, bad, cowardly*).

Now grammar touches many other subject areas and these relationships are always especially enlivening and productive. Eventually all types of polarities appear in the vast expanse of adjectives. They appear of themselves: *light-dark, little-big, slippery-sticky, strong-weak, nice-mean, brave-cowardly, dumb-smart, red-green* (here you can add a whole row of color exercises with complementary colors), *warm-cold, heavy-light*.

Adjectives are the area of language that can be most easily ignored and turned inside out, for this area demands harmonious, human maturity. Our life of feeling is our organ for reality. One author once said, "Look into which adjectives you use and you will discover what kind of person you are."

If this area becomes impoverished and underdeveloped, our language becomes dry and empty. Then it must be refreshed with passionately

impregnated reinforcements: *very small, ghastly nice, terribly sweet, swine pretty*, not to mention: *devilishly good, acceptably smart, rottenly fun*. Or adjectives are strengthened by an additional word: *extremely fine, extremely good*, and *extremely ugly*. In short: inflation. In this way we can move from one part of speech to the next. All of them hide their human possibilities. And the same is true of grammar's other main area, the word's reciprocal relationships or syntax. For language sleeps until it is awakened. Grammar is one of the paths to an inner awakening.





Subject, Predicate and Object in Grammar

by

Jørgen Smit

A fifth grade girl wrote an essay in which the following paragraph appeared: “They came running towards us are you the ones who smashed Mr. Hanson’s window no we have not yes you have Anne says that she saw you no yes no.”

The teacher reads it for the class and explains: You must place a period after “us.” Then add the first quotation mark and a capital “A.” After “window” there is a question mark, add the final quotation mark and “they asked.” Then you need to place another quotation mark and a capital letter. Now listen to what you wrote: “yes no yes no yes.” That is terrible. You must write: “Yes,” they said. “No,” we answered. When people speak there need to be clear boundaries between one person and the next. Do you understand?

The girl stared at the teacher amazed and broke out: “But that is how they speak on the street. They speak straight ahead, back and forth.”

She had said something very important. Our language streams straight ahead, back and forth—until it gradually becomes more conscious and reflected. We learn our mother language without any grammar. Already by the age of three or four we can use clauses and verbs in many tenses without knowing anything about “the past” or “the future” or conjunctions that introduce clauses. If the adults around children speak correctly, the children will imitate and can learn to speak correctly without studying any grammar. The same is true of a foreign language. In principle, it is unnecessary to know grammar to learn to speak a foreign language. Many people learn languages by imitation. Another possibility is to use grammar

as a crutch before you learn to move freely and speak “straight ahead, back and forth.” Especially if your ability to imitate is poorly developed, grammar may be a necessary tool if you want to speak correctly. But is that the only function for grammar? Is that the reason for learning grammar in school?

If so, we would need to reduce grammar to the very minimum. But that is not the most important function of grammar. By learning and practicing grammar, something of great importance for the entire human development of children can take place. It can be an important part of awakening and sharpening consciousness. With grammatical reflections the words and sentences flow in a new way. They no longer flow “straight ahead, back and forth.” With this clarification and objectivity we take a distance to what we say. Self-consciousness increases. At the same time we develop the ability to present an issue more clearly.

Already making the simplest comparisons between words moves us in this direction. And grammar can gradually expand and be deepened from small transparent areas to more and more completely composed networks of every possible combination. The whole time grammar can have a consciousness-sharpening function. At the same time it always has the tendency to become absolutely meaningless, useless and damaging. What is the meaningless and the damaging that can appear in grammar lessons?

The consciousness-awakening effect of grammar can bring forth something dry and pale. The language’s poetic, colorful sounds, a poem’s emerging pictures must be experienced directly in their own qualities. And this is where schools often make huge mistakes. For example, who has not experienced at school a poem totally analyzed as a grammatical example, so that when you hear it as an adult, you almost become sick to your stomach? In poems there are often uncommon grammatical connections. And the teacher cannot help but explain and analyze every detail so it will be crystal clear for the pupils. That is, will occur eventually. But meanwhile the poem is murdered for the pupils. It has lost all of its poetical, immediate range of experiences. Indeed, the pupils can explain the grammar, but because of the “poem murder,” grammar is also fully distasteful.

This is not only true for poetry. It is also the case for all prose that has an artistic composition. Here we have to be very careful and do whatever we can to help the true experience emerge.

When adults have already learned and mastered grammar, there can be an advantage for them to analyze artistically composed prose and poetry. In that case the adult is sufficiently strong and independent in his inner life to carry out such work without losing the artistic, poetical value of the poem or prose. To the contrary, it often strengthens the poetic experience.

In grammar lessons the teacher should make separate examples for the various grammatical functions. It is not necessary to bring the idiotic and mundane examples that we often find in older grammar books. What are most important are the grammatical functions. And the children should know the content. For example, the teacher can use experiences from the lessons, the classroom or recess. Without using names she can address the needs of various children in the class.

Most importantly the teacher should develop the grammar lessons so the pupils can write their own examples. First then, have the children learn the grammar rules. If every child can make his own example, one after the other and not just repeat something that has already been presented, then the teacher is on the right path.

But there is always a real danger with grammar lessons. It always tends to become a pale, superficial scheme that is used routinely: subject, predicate, object, clauses, infinitives, and so forth. Eventually it becomes a well-oiled machine with a routine and complete analysis by which sentence after sentence is evaluated according to its type, the sentence parts and the types of words in as great detail as possible.

What is the point with such “complete” machinery? Does it have any meaning at all for life, to be able to identify the plural, indefinite object or the conditional clauses? Doubtful. But that was never the intention. The intention is to use grammar as a way to awaken consciousness on a path to knowledge that sharpens conscious clarity, streaming step by step from the grey clouds into the clear sky. But when grammar becomes an automatic function, a routine machine-like process where the analysis takes place without having to think about it, it has again become meaningless. What is significant is that the child continually discovers something new in the grammar lessons; she finds a new relationship and creates new examples.

There is nothing wrong with using the conventional definitions. For the most part they are useful. It would be risky to continually change the names of the definitions, even though it would be a good exercise to make totally new definitions. The decisive aspect of grammar is for the children

to continually ask questions anew. When they re-ask or rediscover a moment in grammar, the teacher is going a good job. How does this really work? What is the relationship here? Could it not be different? The more such questions come alive, the better they become at masterfully making their own examples.

Often an apparently naïve question can become a very intricate question that can stop a routine and meaningless process. For example: “He saw me.” *He* is the subject, *saw* is the predicate, *me* is the object. In German it is written: “Er sah mich.” Or, for example: “He helped me.” *He* is the subject, *helped* is the predicate, *me* is the object. And in German it is: “Er half mir.” *Mich* and *mir* are different. *Mich* is accusative and *mir* is dative.

So the pupil asks, “Why should it be dative with the verb *half* and accusative with the verb *sah*?” Does the teacher answer by saying, “We learned the rule in our verse: *begegnen, behagen, danken, dienen...and helfen*. All you have to do is remember the verse!” No, that would be routine. You cannot say that the verb uses dative because it is in the verse. The verb is in the verse because it is dative. The verse does not help to answer the difficult question. Nor can the teacher explain why we have a different word formation for the dative in German and not in English.

The teacher cannot always answer all the questions. There are many strange things in language’s labyrinthine passages. But the teacher should rather help the children to ask more questions with real interest. It is essential that he has a sense for the value in such questions and does not dismiss them. Then we also arrive at interesting answers.

When we use grammar in the grade school it is important to take into consideration the possibilities for each age group. In the first, second and third grades, the teacher can use lists of words and verses in which grammar lies just below the surface. But leave it there and wait until the time is right. Grammar appears much stronger and healthier at the time the child’s inner development corresponds to the relevant learning process. Real grammar should be delayed until the fourth grade.

The fourth grade brings an important level of development wherein the feeling for the Self or “I” awakens to a new independence. “They are there and I am here.” The border between the world and the child is more distinct than before. This is when grammar, in its initial form, can be one of many ways of learning. Our goal is to make this a positive and healthy

experience. If the teacher has already caused a false start with grammar in the second or third grade, there could be damage. Bringing a foreign body into the younger classes will most often reduce the effectiveness of grammar when it truly should be presented.

In the fourth grade the first level of grammar is relevant: the qualities of the parts of speech. (See “A Little Introduction to Grammar” in this journal.) At the age of twelve in the sixth grade, children reach a new level of development. The child awakens to the outside world more objectively. Physics and chemistry are relevant. And the feeling of Self becomes a consciousness of Self. Now the students need to practice separating the subject from the object. Sentence analysis can be used powerfully. Of course you can prepare for sentence analysis in the fifth grade, but if you do so superficially, it can be unhealthy and support a premature development of the child’s intellect. It will also reduce the effectiveness of grammar lessons at the ages of twelve to thirteen.

When we begin with sentence analysis in the sixth grade, it should be done in a main lesson that covers three to four weeks. This leaves room for a lot of opportunities. The following is especially fruitful: The teacher starts with a thunderstorm: *It lightnings. It thunders. It blows. It rains.* Then it is easy for the students to create their own series of impersonal, indefinite expressions. Soon the children find many examples. Multiple, changing conditions in the atmosphere and in the four seasons appear: *It shines. It darkens. It snows. It hales. It drizzles. It dries. It grows. It sprouts. It flowers. It withers.*

Do not be content with just a few examples. All of the pupils should find their own expressions and listen to each other. Then they can write them up in a long series. Drawing and painting pictures of their examples are good activities as well.

In all of these impersonal, indefinite expressions, a definite subject is missing. In ancient times they often had certain gods as the subject, for example: Zeus thunders. Zeus lightnings. Zeus rains. But these figures disappeared and all we have left is the indefinite: something all-encompassing and overpowering that we are part of and that we cannot understand. Yet it may be something that was hidden temporarily, something that can appear any minute: It knocks. Who knocks? The door is opened and Peter walks in. Peter knocked.

To experience this more clearly, let two pupils go out in the hall. One shall stand aside while the other knocks. We who are inside do not know who knocks. It knocks. Who knocks? Before the door opens we all write up who we think it is who knocks. The door opens and the subject enters the classroom. Can it ever happen that the whole class guesses correctly?

Now the teacher need not ask if anyone else wants to go out and knock. Rather he needs to dampen the enthusiasm. Everyone wants to go out and try. We repeat the exercise many times. After a couple of times the whole class guesses incorrectly. For now a tricky kid has purposely knocked differently than we would expect from him. It was a different subject than we assumed.

We can change the exercise to a hand that waves through the door opening. It waves. Who waves? Many pupils are very sure they know who waves. But many do not recognize the hands they have seen a thousand times before.

So the teacher passes out pieces of paper. On one piece is written: *knock*. All the others are blank. The pupils sit with their hands underneath the desks. They try to identify the sound and direction when one of them knocks. You can do this for a while and then draw pictures of some examples where the definite subject appears.

Then each pupil finds his example of sentences with a subject and a predicate. We introduce grammatical terminology and carry out the analysis: Peter speaks. Speaks = predicate. Who speaks? Peter = the subject.

Of course pupils can learn the first phase of sentence analysis much quicker and much more routinely. But then it would be a superficial, mechanical and meaningless operation. Even finding the subject must be something that works into the child as strongly as possible. It must be an experience with the most quality of discovery: WHO knocks? The goal is to have an inner tension in the process of discovery.

Here many teachers can easily make mistakes. They think the first phase (subject-predicate) is so easy you can do it quickly and use the lesson time on more difficult relationships such as relative pronouns, infinitives and prepositions. But that is a big mistake! The relationship between subject and predicate is the core of sentence analysis. If you teach so well that this relationship appears as a realistic relationship and not a formal, routine question, then something has happened for the pupils.

That is most important. In addition, something has taken place in their understanding of grammar. The more powerful the subject appears, the easier the other parts of the sentence are to see. You need to take your time with this and practice multiple methods: run the sentences through all the verb tenses and then turn all of the sentences into questions. The latter is especially important. The subject must be found—no matter where it appears in the sentence.

We adults can easily forget to place ourselves within the possibilities children have in each phase of their development. For us it is no problem to find a subject in the sentence; we have passed that stage. But children are on their way out of a streaming life-filled experience in which the relationship to a subject is not yet clear. Eventually the subject appears out of the fog. In truth, that is a huge event. It takes time and it must be emphasized correctly.

With the following words the Austrian author, Adalbert Stifter, described the streaming life-filled experiences at the beginning of his childhood:

Long ago in the empty space there is something that resembles joy that streams into my being, grasping me powerfully, as if to destroy me, something very different from anything later in my life. When I describe it I must say shining things below. It must have been very clear, for it is as if the universal darkness was up above and surrounding it. There was something else that soothed through me. It was a sound. I swam in something that waved, I swam back and forth and it became softer and softer, I became dizzy and then there was nothing. It lies like a fairy tale in a sea of clouds in my past, like the primal memory of a folk.

C.G. Jung gave a description from his own childhood. It must have been in the sixth grade:

On the way to school, there was one moment where I suddenly had an overpowering feeling that I had come out of a thick cloud with the consciousness that now “I” am. Behind me was a cloud. Behind that I was not in existence. But in that moment I became myself. [He used the German expression: *Geschah ich mir.*] Before then I existed but

everything was just something that happened. Now I knew: NOW I AM. NOW I HAVE BECOME.

Before we continue in our grammar lessons with the parts of speech, we can do a supplemental language exercise. We transform an indefinite, impersonal expression into an expression with subject. Then we turn the expression into a noun by allowing the verb to have an adjective form as present participle:

It grows. The grass grows. Growing grass.

It withers. The leaves wither. Withering leaves.

It darkens. The heavens darken. Darkening heavens. Dark heavens.

During the first step of these examples, you stand within nature. Then a definite subject appears in a definite process. And finally we have a subject as the concept. At first the verb (as predicate) controls alone. There is simply something that happens. In the next step the process is limited. And finally the living process resolves into a quality of the definite subject. You may protest that a sixth grader cannot fathom this conceptually, but this shifting transformation is important to bring forth: The verb transforms into an adjective in the present participle. Remember that *participle* means something we “participate in.” What does the participle participate in? It participates in the verb and adjective parts of speech? It is a verb with the function and form of an adjective.

Such transformations do not need to confuse. You will meet the transformations no matter what. If we do not teach them, they will be confusing for the students. Once the children have practiced subject and predicate and you have treated the predicate words (which we omit in this article), the objectives appear.

Here the teacher needs to clean up his own bad grammar habits whereby all cats are grey and all objects are the object:

I sing a song. *Song* = object

I help Mother. *Mother* = object

Isn't that strange? In one case the object is the result of the action, in the other it is an independent person who does not even need to be present,

who could be resting in bed for all we know. For her the relationship is what I am doing when I help her. Is not *mother* in this sentence the indirect object? Is *mother* truly an object? Yes, in all thick and thin grammar books it is considered an object, so it must be correct.

If the teacher routinely trains the pupils to find the objects, they can learn to do it without error. Nor would it matter that you swept important nuances under the rug. But you can reach much farther if you find the core of each object, its origin. And this may be found in such sentences as: *He sings a song. I think a thought.* These are so-called “inner objects,” since the object is the content of the action.

At the next level the object appears from the action as a finished product: *He baked bread. Mother knitted a sweater* (a product object). At the next level you can do an action with an object that was there before: *He moves the stool.* *Stool* is not the action nor is it a product of the action (a transformation object).

There can be a superficial transformation and there can also be a transformation of the entire appearance: *He paints the stool.* Or the object can be completely transformed: *He melts the snow* (a transformation object).

And there can be an object we do not want to do anything to other than look at it: *He saw a horse.* Here the sensory verbs appear: *see, hear, smell, feel, discover, find* (sensory objects).

We can also divide something: *He sliced the cake.* Or an object can be destroyed completely: *He smashed the lamp* (a damaged object).

Once in a while we can make things better again: *He repaired the watch* (a beneficial object). And finally, we reach a damaged object or a beneficial object that is not merely singular but independent: *I help Mother* (personal, beneficial object).

There is a long list of types of objects (we have introduced only the most important) from the inner objects and the product objects to the personal beneficial objects that are farthest away from the inner object. With one little jump, it can become the indirect object.

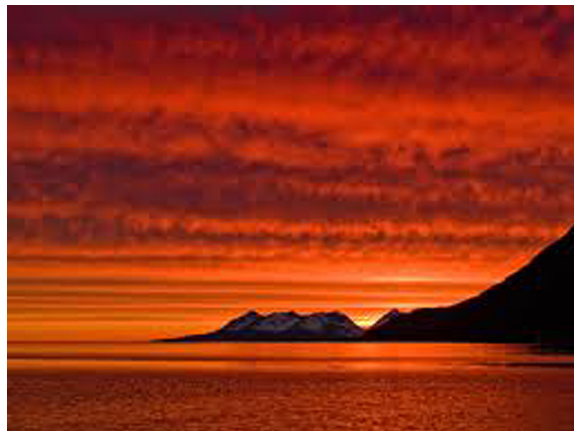
Mary lost her book. (a transformation object)

I help her. (personal, beneficial object)

I give her (indirect object) the book. (a transformation object)

From the very first moment a child speaks her first word, language streams from the human being's inner being and expresses what is hidden in feelings and intensions. From the very first moment, language has the possibility to enable the unique quality of all things, actions and beings to come forth objectively, if it is not burdened or polluted by subjective egotism.

In language, in the word, lives the great human possibility to express our inner and true relation to reality. In the most profound meaning, language can unite the *subject* with the *object*. The purely human quality of this unity is that it is never given in advance as a finished thing that can be acquired. Language lives and it must evolve continually, be discovered anew, conquered anew, and created anew. Every single human being faces the task of finding his or her own unique way to participate in these processes.





The Past, Present and Future

by

Jørgen Smit

Young children live in the moment. But they do not know it. They are not burdened by memories from the past. Nor do they dream of the distant future. In the first childhood years their soul life is determined by immediate impressions. Light and sound stream into each child. When she enjoys drinking from her mother's breast, we can see by the movements of her feet how the experience passes through her entire body. And when a young child suffers an ear infection, she can do nothing about the pain, for she cannot make the experience objective.

Memories awaken in children as they begin to grow older. Then experiences become repetitions of previous events. And the memories are so direct that they identify something that recurs alongside their momentary sensory experiences.

They also look forward to events in the future. Many of their first memories are actually parts of their first experiences of the future. At first the distance in time plays no role. Their perspective of time is not conscious. What happened two years ago is the same as yesterday. The same is true of the future. What will happen in the future is as unclear for one day as it is for one week ahead.

Experiences of the past do not bother young children. They have no conscious problems. And future experiences do not yet have the power of ideals in them. The future is an objective, simple experience that happens no matter what attitude the child may have. For young children the past and the future are experienced without personal problems. Therefore an "eternal paradise" atmosphere surrounds our children.

Let us compare this with an elderly person's experience of the past, present and future. Often the very oldest people live anchored in the past. They can tell great stories from their youth and childhood. These stories are often very powerful and objective. The elder person has worked through many of the personal problems connected with his memory. The pictures appear in space in such a way that they are beside other pictures that are more eternal. And what about the future? Some will think our elderly have no future. In truth they have merely an insignificant piece of their personal future on this side of the threshold to death. An old person has a clarified experience from the past that rises above his personal ideals and dreams. An objective, spiritual necessity appears. It is the prophet. He sees what will take place in the future of necessity.

With such an experience of the past and future, it is possible to find peace and quiet in the moment. Therefore old people often have a glance of eternity in their eyes that streams directly into the moment.

Between the experiences of the elderly and the young children, human beings must struggle with the past and future each day of their lives. Self-knowledge is gained by finding the important aspects of our own being. The goal is to realize more and more of our being in life, so our true Self appears in our actions.

Let us observe a short phase in which the experience of time first appears with a certain, personal self-consciousness. This is generally between the ages of nine and ten. Up to this time the child lives in the moment. If a child does something wrong, the situation needs to be taken care of immediately. If one waits until the day after, the situation is already out of date. The children wonder why the adult is still talking about it. By the age of nine, children no longer live entirely within the immediate moment. Most children experience conflicts with adults at this age, are bothered by past actions and fear future events. They feel lonely and burdened for weeks and months by personal experiences. They may do wrong things to test their independence through inner opposition to the entire world. Or it can be a legitimate or illegitimate action that the teacher or the parent carried out against them. For a long time, the child is struck by self-pity. For the first time the child carries a piece of the past filled with personal feelings. Therefore a new experience of the past awakens. And at the same time something just as strong awakens in their sense of the future: the great ideals.

By the age of nine young children already "know" what they want to be when they grow up: a constable, a bus-driver, a farmer, a fireman. The pictures of these professions are concrete mental images. Yet these images are not future dreams nor are they ideals.

At roughly the age of nine the transition sets in and colorful experiences in time appear. This is the basis for the first conscious experiences of verbs in time: the future, present and past. Usually we start grammar lessons at this age by introducing the three main parts of speech: verbs, nouns and adjectives. (See article "A Little Introduction to Grammar" in this Journal.)

By telling short stories we can provide examples of verbs in time that take place in the classroom. Here I suggest teachers avoid using the stories to point moralizing fingers at the children. Difficult situations can be camouflaged so they are not so pressing. But you want the children to recognize the actions and the messages so they know they have experienced them.

From your stories the children can find verbs in the various tenses. Ask them to make lists and draw pictures. Another good way to deepen the experiences is to act out the verbs. For example, one child stands before the class and acts out a verb. The others guess what the verb is: he *shovels*, he *zips*, he *cuts*, he *dances*, he *hoes*, he *counts*, and so forth. All of the actions take place in the present.

When that child is finished, he sits on a stool in front of the class and is asked to be silent while the next one stands up to act out a different verb. Now the child on the stool can guess what the other child is acting out. The teacher names the stool the "stool from the past." When the child sitting on the stool guesses correctly, the child that did the pantomime gets to sit on the "stool from the past." She moves from the present into the past. A new child stands before the class and pantomimes another verb. When the child on the "stool from the past" guesses correctly, the teacher asks the child in the present tense role, "What did you do?" The child answers in the past tense and then sits down on the "stool of the past."

You can repeat the game until the children are satisfied, and then try it using the future tense. A second stool is set before the class on the other side of the child that pantomimes in the present. This is the "stool of the future." The teacher asks the child who steps forward to whisper what he

will do, for example, “I will saw.” The future is hidden within the child and the teacher. It is unknown. It is a matter of willpower. The action shall appear in the next moment from the hidden intention. “Do it!” says the teacher. The child stands up and carries out the future intention as a present action. The other children forget to raise their hands and shout out, “He saws!” The child that “sawed” sits in the “stool of the future.” Silence. The teacher pretends he has not been paying attention and then suddenly asks again, “What did he do?” The class answers in chorus, “He sawed!”

With this game all the children visualize the stream of time coming from the future as it moves into the present and then into the past. Only the present action is visible. The past comes from a picture in their memory. The future entails latent, willpower intentions.

Now have the children draw pictures of this. The actions are drawn three times each. In order to show that only the actions in the present are visible you can color, for example, a red cloud around the picture in their memory from the past and a blue cloud around the picture of the willpower intention in the future. Then the children can write down all kinds of examples of verbs in columns below, using three separate colors for the columns.

In order to summarize and make an overview of what you have done, find a way to present all three tenses without using the separate examples. Remember not to make this overview before the game. First the children must experience the examples and then you summarize.

There are many ways to summarize the tenses. For example: draw three circles side by side and connect them slightly by overlapping each other. Draw three human figures within the circles, one in the present, one in the past and one in the future. Afterwards, let the children draw arrows from the past circle to the present circle and vice versa, from the present circle into the past circle. Do the same in both directions to the future circle and the present circle. This drawing demonstrates that the human being always stands in the present circle, yet he always has a past person behind him and a future person before him.

Once you have worked with these themes in the grammar block, take up other subjects such as botany, history or zoology and wait some months before presenting the more complicated tenses, such as: the perfect tense,

the past perfect and the future perfect tenses. This gives the children time to let the previous grammar lessons sink into their memory first.

How do all of the tenses relate to each other? There are only three times: the present, past and the future. But there are a number of tenses, each expressing a different action. Some tenses express the actions as they happen and others express the actions as a finished process.

When I say, “I chopped wood,” I express that I live in the past action as it unfolds. If I say, “I had chopped wood,” I express, in the past perfect tense, that I remember a time in the past when the action was already completed. I create a completed picture of the event that is projected into the past. It is more of a thoughtful, reflected expression compared with the past action where I continue to live with my feelings and willpower within the past events. When I say, “I have chopped wood,” I express in the perfect tense an action that is now a completed thought in the moment. Therefore the helping verb *have* is in the present tense.

We can ask whether the perfect or the past tense is closer to the present in terms of time. The answer is neither of them! This question is incorrectly asked but it occurs in many schematic presentations of grammar. The past and the perfect are just as close and just as far away, but in different ways. They belong to two different aspects.

The perfect, the past perfect and the future perfect (I *will have chopped* wood) are verbal actions expressed in three times (present, past and future) as completed, reflected thoughts. In other words, they are the thinking aspect of all three times, while present, past and future are the feeling and willpower aspects of verbal actions.

In the fifth grade we learn the more complicated tenses with a series of examples. Two children stand in front of the class. One sits on the “stool of the future.” The other stands behind it. The first one says, “I will paint” (future tense). The child behind says, “Soon he will have painted a complete painting” (future perfect tense). The first child stands up and pantomimes painting and says, “I paint” (present). Then he stops painting and the children in the class say in chorus, “Now he has painted completely” (perfect tense). The first child sits on the “stool of the past” and says, “I painted.” The other child stands behind the “stool of the past” and says, “Awhile ago I had already painted completely” (past perfect tense). Then the teacher can ask many questions that require the pupils to use the various tenses.

In this way we make each action visible for the children. And they understand both aspects (represented by both children in the game) that appear in all three time phases.

Now the children are ready to write down a series of examples and they can deepen their experience of the actions by drawing them. The drawings can also be simplified into a graphic overview. You can create the graphic overview by drawing a horizontal line with three points highlighted; one is the future, the next the present and the third the past. Then draw three vertical lines that pass through the highlighted points. Name them the future perfect, the perfect and the past perfect tenses. The vertical line that meets the horizontal line in the past point is the past perfect. The two other vertical lines that cross the horizontal line

In the present point and the future point are the perfect points and the future perfect points respectfully. When this is well-practiced by the children, we can approach it from new perspectives. Otherwise you end up in grammar drills.

It is also valuable for the teacher to realize that the forms we have in the English language are not eternal laws but a short moment in the historic development of the language. The development of language is always a spiritual battle. Only grown, mature individualities can participate in the battle for mankind's further development that takes place between the past and the future within every day's present moment.

Yet children already experience a preparatory stage that entails the same qualities. And in grammar lessons these qualities are worked upon with age-appropriate methods.



The Child's Word Sense and Thinking Sense

by

Jørgen Smit

Never before has it been so important to learn a foreign language. If one's mother tongue is one of the world languages, it is easy to assume that this language is good enough. And this very assumption can lead to large-scale international tension and conflicts.

When the Hellenistic culture had unfolded to its broadest extent, the Hellenic people were sure they were the "right" people with the "right" language. Everyone else spoke the "wrong" language; they were barbarians or people who spoke words that could not be understood. At that time the Hellenic people had a folk-egoistic attitude and a language-egoistic attitude. Despite both of these they were able to create a noble culture. But the same folk-egoistic and language-egoistic attitudes today could lead to catastrophic conflicts that could destroy the culture involved.

Where have the different languages come from? Is there a common origin? Linguist and language historian Dr. Arnold Wadler worked relentlessly to find the common primeval tongue of the origin of humanity. We will look at two of his comparisons. The first one concerns the word for *fire* in six languages:

Latin: IGNIS

Sanskrit: AGNI

Slavic: OGONI

Eskimo: IGNEK

African: UGONI

Tasmanian: NGUNE

These words come from all five continents. The North American IGNEK resembles the Southern European IGNIS while the African UGONI and the Australian NGUNE seems closest to the Eastern European OGONI. These word relationships must have evolved from a common origin, for it is impossible that they were transferred at a later date from one to another language.

How strong the original experience of the word for fire must have been for human beings! To what extent the entire human existence was connected with fire. And what deep devotion people had for the flames of the sacrificial fires. The word that expressed the original experience and thereby pointed towards the sacrificial flames had a powerful, expressive movement that has continued for thousands of years. In all six examples we find a resemblance to the original word for fire, GN. Even in Norwegian the word for *spark* is *gnist*!

Let us follow the word *star* in the following languages:

Norwegian: STJERNE

German: STERN

English: STAR

Italian: ASTRO

Also Italian: STELLA (from the original word group:
STERLA

Greek: ASTRON, ASTER

Persian: STAREM

Armenien: ASTL

Bretagne: STERN

So far we have dealt with the Indo-Germanic language community. But Dr. Wadler discovered the same consonant group, S-T-R in the word for *star* also in a South American Indian dialect:

Patagonian: SETERE

In this word we can hear a sound that stems from the power of the original word. And the Norwegian word today “stjerne” also sounds like the original sound that prehistoric people spoke when they pointed to the stars in the sky.

Within the word groups of “fire” and “star” we can imagine some of the qualities of the original human language. In ancient times language worked so deeply and had such a magical power in human beings that it could unite them within one group soul. Independent people with personal “I” consciousness had not yet been developed.

Over time “language confusion” appeared. Language became less and less magical, more and more superficial. The movement or gesture in each word no longer pointed in the direction of what lived in the object or what worked in the object. As it is today, the movement of the word pointed more and more to something practical. The rich sound of words is increasingly removed and we end up with the flat, business words in large cities or dried out words from beaurocracy. The development of languages through the millennia has resulted in countless languages, with each language pointing to a certain sector on the surface of our consciousness. This is the real situation we face today. We must take it seriously. It is our starting point.

Today the basic quality of words remains “to point” in a direction. Words are mostly expressive movements or gestures that are heard. The fundamental structure of a language lives in the consonants. They provide the gesture of the specific object. In both of our word comparisons of *fire* and *star*, it is easy to see that the groups of consonants provide the fundamental structure with which we identify the words.

In the vowels of a word we find the soul experience that weaves in the atmosphere surrounding the structure. Interjections are usually pure vowels or diphthongs. In these words the emphasis is placed on the soul experience so that the object of the experience is not pointed to by the gesture of the word.

In every other part of speech the object appears more predominantly. It may be the action, will-sphere of the verb. It may be in the direction of the mental image or picture quality of the nouns. It may be in the feeling experience of the adjective or adverb.

Words may be specific commands, for example, “Out!” They may be replaced with a physical gesture, for example pointing to the door. They can also be inner, soul-like gestures. Or they can point nowhere and remain empty phrases.

With what do we comprehend words? We can say that we experience words with our entire being. The entire human organism is where we

comprehend words. This also includes comprehending light and colors, sounds and noise. Yet we should differentiate between the sense of sight and the sense of hearing because of their organs: the eye and the ear.

Do we comprehend the word with our sense of hearing? In each word there is a moment of tones and noise and that is comprehended with the help of the ear. Someone who is deaf understands only a small part of the tones and the noise. But he still understands the word. For what makes a word become a word is not the word's sound or the pattern of its noise but rather its pointing gesture. Deaf people can understand words by reading someone's lips or the gestures of sign language. Those who are both deaf and blind can understand language from the printed impressions on their hands. Of course, when it comes to understanding words, the deaf and blind are very restricted compared with those who can see and hear. By using a comparison we can understand how the distinctive, sensory activity we call the "word sense" takes place spontaneously as the understanding of tones and colors. It is the sense for that which makes words become words, the gesture of the words within our human, social dynamics.

In many cases a word for a certain situation can be replaced by a facial mimic, hand movements or a more complicated action. When an eyebrow is raised or the upper lip curls slightly, a language is spoken that is as clear as many words. A handshake, not to mention a kiss, can express something in the moment for which we cannot find the words.

Mimic and gestures are understood with the same sense that words are understood with, the word sense. It is natural to use the expression word sense because the words that resound in the air are the dominating field for this sense. This is an important area to be aware of because it is so easy to mix the *word sense* with the *sense of hearing* on one side or the *thinking sense* on the other side. In order to have a complete description of our senses we must include a separate thinking sense.

With thinking sense we mean the understanding of another person's thoughts, not my own thinking activity. When we comprehend another person's thought or what he means, the content appears that relates to his words and the gestures of his words. Within the thought, mental image or message that we understand from the other person, we become conscious in a way that is independent of the gestures of the words even though the word had provided the opportunity for understanding.

Let us look at the difference between the *word sense* and the *thinking sense* by making a simple comparison. We take all three senses—the sense of sight, the word sense and the thinking sense—and observe all three from the same perspective, namely: clarity or lack of clarity in understanding.

1. The Sense of Sight

A. We sit in an almost completely dark room. Barely able to see the glimmer of objects in the room, we stare and try to identify what we see. Now we use our sense of sight to its utmost. Because there is so little light even with excellent eyes we merely see unclear objects we cannot identify properly.

B. We are outside in a landscape with the sun shining brightly in the dry, clear air. Yet we are very near-sighted and have forgotten our glasses at home. Everything is blurred.

C. Or we walk in other “thoughts” and ignore the colorful world surrounding us. In this case we merely comprehend unclear sensory impressions despite the light conditions.

For the sense of sight impressions to be clear, we need the right light conditions, an organ for the sense of sight and the proper use of that sensory organ. If one or another is missing, the sensory impression becomes unclear or it disappears completely.

2. The Word Sense

A. We are together with a friend who speaks our mother tongue and we are very excited about what he will say. Yet there is a very short time for us to exchange words and our friend speaks so unclearly and quickly that we understand only a couple of words and are therefore in doubt concerning what he really said. Did he say something else?

B. We are together with a guest who speaks a foreign language that we barely understand. He speaks slowly and clearly. Every sound is completely clear, yet we understand nothing though we try to our limits. That they are clear words is not hard to accept. Our word sense is that well developed. But it is not developed well enough to understand more than: *abracadabra*.

C. We sit with two friends who speak our mother tongue. But we sit in “other thoughts” because what they are talking about does not interest

us very much. We cannot avoid hearing that they speak. A word here and there is understood by accident. For the most part it is babble babble.

In order for our word sense to comprehend clear expressions, three conditions must be present: clearly spoken words, the correspondingly developed sense of words and attention to use the sense of word.

3. The Sense of Thinking

A. We are together with a friend. He defines the meaning of something. He speaks slowly and clearly. We understand every word he says. His word sense works perfectly, but we still do not understand what he means. He says one thing and then he says the opposite, then he says something a little bit differently, only to repeat the first. What in the world does he really mean? What he says is clear enough. But what is the thought in it? It disappears in a grey cloud. Where there is no clear thought, a very well developed sense of thought with heightened attention can still not understand anything.

B. Two friends have worked for years on Hegel's logic. A third person enters who has never worked with Hegel or any other philosophy. He listens to their conversation in total amazement. Every word may be clearly and slowly spoken, every thought may be well reflected, well defined and in every way perfectly clear, and still the third person comprehends nothing other than words, clear words, but merely words. The third person's sense of thinking is not developed sufficiently.

C. The last case entails a lack of interest and attention that results in our not understanding the other's thoughts, mental images and meaning although his thoughts are sufficiently clear and well expressed. And we have no understanding despite the fact that our sense of thinking is sufficiently developed and we can understand his thoughts if we want to. This case is so common that we all recognize it from painful experiences when others have not understood our thoughts. Yet we are usually not aware of the times we do not understand other people's thoughts, for the very same reasons. In order to understand the theory completely we must assume the relationship is mutual.

In order to comprehend clear impressions with our thinking sense, it is necessary that all three conditions are present: clear thoughts on the part of the other person, an adequately developed thinking sense of one's own, and an interest for and attentiveness to another's thoughts.

Is it possible to describe the sense of thinking with even more detail? The eye is the organ for the sense of sight. What is the organ for the sense of thinking? It is not as easy to point at that organ as it is with the eye. A characteristic quality of this organ is that it is just as present as the eye, but it has a different consistency. This how it works:

When we comprehend a new thought for the first time, we add that thought to all of the our earlier thoughts. Our previous thoughts suck in the new thought passionately. From the earliest years of childhood to adulthood, we have a hidden organism in us that continually grows, our thinking organism. It is an organism of hidden possibilities to be able to call certain thoughts into our consciousness. This organism can be strong and grow powerfully. The more thoughts we have comprehended, the greater is our ability to receive new and stranger thoughts, that is, the more developed our sense of thinking becomes. But this organism can be little and weak. The strange thoughts go right over our head. No matter how hard we try we are not able to comprehend them. When the teacher presents something new, he must always try to fold it into what has been presented previously. A teacher can help a pupil only to the same extent that he can think and feel with the pupils, to the same extent that he knows what they know. Otherwise he thinks and speaks over their heads. For new thoughts must be understood with the help of what has been worked on previously.

In psychology this is considered a mass of mental images that are accessible and that make one able to understand an apperception of something new. This long and heavy word is a bad choice. This “mass” we are talking about is not a dead mass that is exposed to pressure and hits. We should speak of growth. Therefore the word organism is much more accurate, a thinking organism as the organ for the sense of thinking. Now we have moved forward in our description of the organ for our sense of thinking. For every little growth in the thinking organism, from the tiniest sprouts in early childhood to the highest expression among adults, change is possible only when something else takes place in the physical body, and here we must consider not only that the brain and the nervous system but also the circulation and the respiration systems are especially active and cooperative in this. For example, if we want to consider the physical organ for the thinking organ, we can look at something as focused as the eye. The organ for the sense of thinking is in continual growth. It has its

purely physical basis in the processes of the physical body, the functional processes where naturally the nervous system and the brain play central roles.

In this way we can also better understand the organ for the word sense. The very first words we comprehend as a child are always those that the gestures of the words appear clearly in what is taking place with the child. The child comprehends with other senses, and the first words form an entity, an organism that is growing continuously. The more words the child learns, the easier he comprehends what comes next. What is new folds into what has been and the ability to understand words grows. The organism of words already mastered acts as an organ for the word sense. In psychology we speak of a word-apperception mass. Just as with the expression “mental image apperception mass,” this expression is very misleading. The expression “word organism” is more accurate and understandable, for it is an entity that grows and in which each little detail exchanges directly with the whole organism.

Now how does this relate to the senses of sight, taste and smell? Do they not grow also as they are cultivated and exercised? All of our senses may be developed further. Yet if we compare these three senses with our word sense and sense of thinking, we find an extreme difference. The word sense and the sense of thinking have much greater developmental possibilities than the other three. This is due to their differentiated physical organs. The physical bases for the sense of thinking and the word sense are much more part of the entire physical constitution and activity. Therefore the sense of thinking and the word sense are more dependent on a person's efforts and especially dependent upon whom we are living with. For every word we learn to comprehend, for every thought, we learn to open ourselves, to take part in something that reaches far beyond our individual person. For every word we comprehend in our mother tongue, we are moved in our inner life by a higher spiritual being that expresses itself in the mother tongue. For every thought we comprehend of another person's thinking, our inner life is influenced by an even higher spiritual being that lives purely within humanity.

In our times especially, that which lives purely within humanity is strongly repressed, barely visible. Thoughts do not appear as pure thoughts

but rather as phrases, and our words remain tied down to hardened, group-egotistical relationships.

The word sense is a prerequisite for the sense of thinking. The mother tongue is a prerequisite for the purely human element in all of humanity. But we must move beyond the word sense into the sense of thinking. We must move beyond the mother tongue to the purely human.

And this gives us a new perspective on learning foreign languages. During the first seven years, it is best for children to live with one language so that their word sense is developed in peace and quiet. But as of grade one it is very important to develop the word sense a little beyond the borders of the mother tongue. For every word that children comprehend of a foreign language, something lives that liberates people from the narrow egotism of their own people.

The larger, practical aspect of knowing a foreign language is another reason for learning as much of a foreign language as possible, but let us exaggerate this for a moment. Imagine we die at an early age before we can use the new practical language. Were the efforts we made to learn the foreign language a waste of time? Absolutely not. The inner human development provided by the foreign language is just as important. The original language, that at one time united all mankind in a purely human group soul, has disappeared. We can barely imagine some of its sounds in our modern languages. But it appears in a new way, within the people who develop themselves in such a way that the purely human aspects of mankind are alive in independent individuals.

These preliminary observations of what the word sense and the sense of thinking entail demonstrate that they are “vulnerable plants” that help us feel the greatest responsibility for children. Every word that is spoken and every thought that is thought in their presence help to form their word organism and thinking organism and become the basis for their word sense and sense of thinking later in life. Educating children is the most responsible meeting between human beings. May we continually become more conscious of this responsibility.





Picture and Concept

by

Jørgen Smit

When we look back upon our life, it appears for us in the form of pictures. We see ourselves in a landscape and in certain situations together with other people. We see ourselves in embarrassing moments and inspiring festivals, in never-ending exhaustion and in liberating celebrations. Everywhere we find changing atmospheres. If we take away the atmosphere, the pictures are no longer the same. This is comparable to a black and white copy of a color photograph; we can use it to recall memories but at its best, it leaves us wanting to see the original picture with the lively moods of the situation.

Do we understand our life, if we observe it in colorful, mood-shifting pictures? No, certainly not. At least not at first.

If we want to get to know ourselves, we cannot remain stuck with these moody pictures as they appear directly in our memory. Should we enquire diligently about each situation and ask what is important, we discover that every picture in our memory is impure, a combination of an important core together with totally irrelevant moments that cover over the facts. There can also be personal reasons for the false representations in our memory.

Friedrich Nietzsche formulated it this way: “My experience tells me that I did it. My pride tells me that I did not do it. Slowly my pride conquers. Now I remember clearly that I did not do it.”

But pictures in our memory are not only misrepresented and falsified to the unrecognizable because of personal soul qualities. To a large extent

the memory pictures are falsified not only due to laziness and sluggish attention, but from the multiple influences of civilization's monotonous, grey, habitual thinking that forces all dramatic realities in every life situation down into the "underconscious" sphere of being.

If one wants to reach the true picture of his own life, it is completely inadequate to merely correct his memory pictures with schematic judgments of true or false. At the most, this can serve as a necessary introduction to the work of cleaning out the falsified pictures. Many important sides, probably the most important sides of our lives are temporarily covered over and may be brought into consciousness through energetic efforts. And what appears then? Is it a concept? A concept that may be defined in a few sentences? Sharp, clearly formulated concepts may possibly help our orientation within the multiple pictures in our memory. But the core of life does not allow itself to be reduced to a concept that may be defined and written down. What we bring into consciousness are purified pictures in which the unimportant and foreign images are removed, allowing the situation to come forth clearly. The picture is now transparent in its entire structure without losing its living quality. In reality it is also identical with the core of a concept that appears in thinking when we work our way into clarity. But it does not hold onto a certain limited definition. If we try that, we soon notice that the definition is not well enough defined. We must define it further. And this continues *ad infinitum*. The reality we are dealing with becomes pulverized and what remains are annihilated, leftover pieces. To use a picture, we have an annihilated snail shell with no living snail inside.

We could say the phrase "to use a picture" with every sentence and for every word we speak. Language is full of pictures. It lives within the power of pictures. Thousands of years of pictures lie hidden in each sound, the form of the word and in the interaction between words. We say, "Strong as a bear." But that is totally inaccurate. He is not as strong as a bear. Yet, this word-picture-expression strikes the core: It gives the impression of being solid and overwhelmingly strong. Or words have a certain meaning in a certain context: The knife has a large "blade," though the blade is not a green and living blade of grass.

Or the word has a picture within that lost its reality a long time ago and the word remains without a new meaning, for example: a "miserable"

person was originally a person who could not live in his own country, but such a person was not necessarily “miserable.”

The more we examine language, the more we discover lots of pictures in every sentence and in every word. In our daily life this quality of language is reduced to practical purposes. Every sentence has a rational meaning. Yet we would not have these totally abstract, pale, precise and useful thoughts if not for thousands of years of language that weave as pictures in the human being’s mental images.

What happens when a picture is created? It is a living entity, i.e., a finalized experience that appears. Yet the picture can change, grow and even depart. But it cannot be analyzed without losing its life, fading, and dying. This is what has happened throughout history as thoughts appeared from within the misty life of pictures.

In the centuries preceding the glorious age of ancient Hellas, mankind comprehended the world in huge, mystical pictures. These pictures were considered both realities in nature, as well as inner soul qualities. As long as people had a fully resonating, lucious, colorful experience of the world in pictures, there was no sharp division between “outer” nature and “inner” soul experiences. Both were understood as two sides of the same thing. Most importantly they realized these pictures were supersensible beings. For example: Zeus engaged in lightning; he colored the clouds. And it is Zeus who allowed the soul expressions to appear in clear thoughts. At the next level Zeus is a “principle,” an activity in the air, alongside other principles and activities, such as Poseidon in the water’s waves, oceans and rivers, in steam and mist. Or such as Chronos, the principle of flames, warmth, fire and all-consuming time. Then we are one short step away from the concepts “air,” “water” and “warmth.”

When pictures pale and become universally valid, they become concepts. This is philosophy’s moment of birth. The extravagant, exuberant life is lost. And what is won? A sharpened clarity and simultaneously the individual awakens to a new understanding of himself. Individualism is irreversibly connected to the birth of concepts and philosophy. From there the path leads to trials and real danger: Gradually the “inner” becomes increasingly cut off from the “outer.” The sharper the abstraction in the creation of concepts, the stronger becomes our consciousness of our own “Self” or “I.” The sharper the abstraction in the

creation of concepts, the stronger nature is considered a foreign object and experienced as dead. This is our starting point. It is the core problem in our times.

The same development from picture to concept can be followed in multiple ways within the individual's life from childhood to adulthood. If you speak with a child and express yourself abstractly and rationally in adult concepts, you stand in crass contrast to the child's soft, rich life. As a rule what you say is also incomprehensible to the child. Or due to admiration for the adult, the child strives to give a mirror image of something with which she cannot connect. She may speak like an adult to make the adult feel better. But if you speak with the child in such a way that one picture follows the next in a coherent, unfolding and weaving language, then the child opens her eyes, her face shines and she understands everything very well.

The developing child is brought to the point where abstract concepts appear. Without this we cannot be mature in our civilized world. We need it as a basis to freely move into clarity and with enough consciousness of our Self and other people as Selves. Yet it is of immeasurable importance how this development takes place. And it is of immeasurable importance how the child's unreflected pictures live further in transformed fashion. The picture-forming ability exists in all thinking. Without the power of picture forming we would never see the whole totality of an issue or object. Strictly speaking, it is not possible to grasp any content at all in thinking without this ability. We can progress very far within the opposite, analytical tendency. We can chop everything into restricted, special meanings. If we choose, we can go even further with more precise definitions and continue to demand the meaning of each word or expression.

When we drive this analytical activity to its most one-sided extreme, the meaning of the picture-forming ability appears. If we merely analyze, we pulverize everything and soon we have nothing more to analyze. Analysis is made by the grace of the picture-forming ability. For analysis must first be presented with something it cannot create on its own. With what do we drive the dissection activity in our analysis? Obviously it is I: I assess myself and strengthen my self-consciousness by chopping to pieces and controlling the foreign, powerful element that is not fully my own within the world of pictures.

In the last two centuries this tendency to divide everything into pieces has been taken so far that an increasing need has arisen for the opposite side, i.e. the world of pictures. But the change in needs does not automatically lead to healthy harmony.

If we do not discover ourselves within the tendency to analyze and dissect, but allow ourselves to merely flow in the stream of civilization, the opposite appears as a caricature in an inhuman, disharmonic form that drives us to a higher level of extreme.

Today there are many caricatures that appear within the vacuum of picture-creating activities and in the corresponding desire for more experiences in pictures. Behind the media's rapid development lies a lust for moving pictures, action. But they do not awaken the individual's own ability to create pictures, and we are thrown into a maelstrom, because we will not yet find the picture-creating activity in our inner life. Media becomes a massive surrogate. If we ignore the large percentage of less dignified content that is presented in films and television, we can focus on the important principles involved, as well as the purely unlimited massive use of the media. Or notice the purely "magic" attraction of comics, especially if there is little text. Film, television and comics satisfy a "picture desire" as surrogates that clearly make people passive in their ability to experience life and the world, themselves and other people in a lively context of real pictures.

There is another important caricature of mankind's picture-ability that appeared toward the end of the 20th century in every case where pictures arise from the "under-consciousness" with their own magical, suggestive activity. These pictures can arise from the chaotic pictures during normal dreams and begin to affect daily actions. In their non-transparent quality they work as a foreign, possessed power in relation to mankind's awakened, reflected Self consciousness. Then the human being's peaceful, free judgment is shut down. Certain things "shall" be done. These possessed pictures command us.

Precisely when the analytical, pulverized intellect reaches a high point in its activity, we are attacked from within and from the outside by a storming flood of pictures that do not increase our picture creating ability. This is where the fight for the human being takes place. Will we awaken to freedom so that the structure of clear, transparent, conceptual thinking can unite with the full-blown life of pictures?

In every single sensory impression, in all colors and sounds, we meet something “foreign” that we want to connect with. Usually we walk on without giving ourselves the time to truly connect with the foreign element. Usually we do not give ourselves time to allow the “picture” to grow forth in an active meeting with our sensory impressions. The same is true of our meetings with other people. We assume we know them in and out from before. Or we think we have nothing to do with them. We hurry on and therefore no meeting takes place. Perhaps we do not know them so well, even if we have met them a thousand times before. We may have something to do with them though they do not belong to our nearest circle of friends. This demands a bit of self-transformation in order to have sufficient attention, devotion and respect for the people we meet. Is it possible to experience how others experience the world? Can it happen without the help of pictures?

Let us use an example to illustrate this situation in multiple directions. At first this example may look like a curiosity, but it will come closer to reality than you think. During his expeditions into the ancient forests of Africa, Henry Stanley gathered his African companions around the bonfire and asked them to tell their own stories. The following story of the creation is from Matageza, from the Basoko tribe who lived along the Aruwimi River where it flows into the Congo River. It took a long time to convince him to speak, and here is a shortened version of what he shared:

In ancient times this land and the entire earth were covered by water. Eventually the water receded in some places and grass and flowers and trees and bushes grew. On the shore an extremely big turtle lived. It rolled in the mud and spat far across the water. And in the sky the moon shone mildly.

The moon said to the turtle: “I will create human beings so they can live on the earth.”

“No,” replied the turtle, “I will create them. You belong in heaven and I belong on earth. As long as I can make them look like me, they will fit on the earth.”

The moon countered, “In truth, if you create them, they will look like you. They will have short and bad lives. But I will create them to completion just like my light that shines in the heavens and they shall be immortal.”

“Do not even try,” said the turtle. “They will not fit on the earth. It would be an airy life where they will fly in heaven. No, I will create human beings. I already know how I will do it. It is swelling up in me.” The turtle blew itself up and hopped across the shore and spat at the moon.

Then the moon threatened the turtle and said that it would not tolerate that human beings should be the descendents of the turtle. But the turtle did not care and continued his efforts. Both of them wanted to create human beings, but the turtle was the first to do so. While the moon was peacefully preparing to make the first human beings as light-filled forms in heavenly completion, both turtle creations were already hopping around the shore, a male and a female, two huge turtles that were supposedly already human beings.

When the moon saw this, he became very angry. “Terrible,” he shouted. “What have you done?”

“Be patient, moon,” answered the turtle. “I have merely done what is right. The earth is mine. You can stay there in heaven. All human beings that shall live on the earth shall descend from me. I have created them and so shall it be.”

“You are very arrogant,” said the moon. “I was supposed to create the human beings. And now you have tried to measure yourself with me. But you are inferior to me and just as inferior are the turtle people compared with the human beings I will create. Your turtle people are merely animals that can neither talk nor think rationally. You deserve to be destroyed so the earth will not have to endure such creatures. But I feel so sorry for you that I will not kill them. I would rather prepare them as well as possible. They may not receive as much of the clear light of thinking as I originally intended. That is not possible with such terrible creatures. But they may have a little. And I will help them through life by sharing my light. They may not be as complete as I had thought. Life will be difficult and sad. And everything is your fault, you huge, ugly turtle. Therefore I want to get rid of you.”

The moon was very angry. With a raging face it approached the turtle and burned it to ash. Only small amounts remained and from this ash came many small turtles and other creatures. But the

moon sank down into the water to cool off, to release the fire of anger. The water became so hot it boiled. The moon remained in the water until the bubbles stopped.

Then the moon rose from the water and sought out the turtle people. When he found them, he called them together. But they were afraid and hid. When the moon saw this, he smiled tolerantly as he does on beautiful evenings. "Pathetic, small creatures," the moon said, "The great turtle has left a lot for me to do. You are missing quite a lot before you can become real human beings." As the moon said this, he guided them down to the water. He carefully dunked them under the water and slowly brought them up again. They became so soft that he could transform them. He patted them here and there as a potter does with his pots. He lifted the front part so they no longer needed four legs to crawl upon, as the turtle had created them. Now they could stand and walk on their own two feet. Their arms would be free. And their head could not stay in the turtle shape. The moon patted the heads and rounded them so they looked more like himself, a round heavenly sphere. Gradually the creatures looked like human beings as we know them.

Then the moon taught them everything and showed them how to live. From these beings all human beings are now descended. Therefore human beings, although closely related to turtles, are different than had they been direct descendants. The light of the moon influenced them and transformed them. Human beings have participated in the light of heaven, the heavenly perfection and the heavenly immortality.

As Matageza finished speaking and everyone rose to go to their huts, many words were exchanged about how terrible it was that human beings have so much of the great turtle in them.

There are many ways to relate to such a story. We can reject it as a ridiculous, mythological picture, for example: "A turtle and the moon cannot speak," or "the moon cannot cool off in the water," and so on. From a naturalistic, rationalistic perspective we can readily ignore such a story. But if we do so, we may as well stay away from all mythological pictures, including the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. We may just

as well ignore all forms of serious art that cannot be manifest without the life of pictures. If we do not want to understand the pictures, we must also reject all art as having any meaning.

Yet there are many other ways to relate. We can research other stories of creation from other cultures, find the common themes and show how some mythological pictures have traveled from culture to culture and time to time.

If we consider the pictures only half seriously, we will remain with something superficial, something indifferent. We do not enter the quality of the pictures. Nor do we ask what lives in them. But we can also think about the pictures until we find an acceptable structure. Then we can rationalize the entire picture: What is a turtle? What is the moon?

People come to a point in their lives when they feel a very strong disconnection. Often the disharmony is exposed in a family crisis or by problems at work. But the disharmony is revealed not only in the outer world; the problem lies in the human being. Sometimes it is so strong that there is a split: On one side everything runs its course instinctively. On the other side there is the desire to act in relation to clear, reflected motives. In every difficult life situation these two sides are in conflict. Something presses, something must be done, and something is not understood. But you cannot wait. Your instincts press so hard that you have to do something. Then you realize later that your actions were wrong, incomplete and dishonorable. So you try to repair the damage—perhaps after the first temper explosion where you would rather destroy everything. You see the “turtle” instincts and the “moon” reflections. In other words you have found an acceptable, rational explanation for the mystical pictures. And you no longer need to be upset that the “turtle” and the “moon” speak with each other. For both of these principles in mankind stand in direct relation to each other. And “speaking” is the picture of this relationship. You do not need to be upset that the moon turns fire red with anger and must cool off before it can improve things. Anger must always be reduced before reflection can create something new.

In this way we can rationalize the entire story to a conceptual structure. With the pride of finding such a conceptual structure, you may consider pictures unnecessary. They can be replaced with concepts. But do not believe that. In the very moment the picture disappears and you remain

with only a reflected concept, you must ask: What do we mean with “reflections,” with “instinctive,” with “relationships,” and so forth? Once again you have only a cold, precise analysis. And if it is consequent—for you should be consequent—the work does not stop, since everything, absolutely everything is completely pulverized.

This process can be put into picture form: The picture is like a living horse. The rationalized conceptual structure compares with the horse’s skeleton. (It is anatomically correct but it is not alive.) The analytical precision does not end before the bones in the skeleton are smashed to powder. If you have ever experienced this, there is no reason to discount the skeleton or the bone powder, but there is a keen desire to also bring back the living horse.

The true human condition is much more blood-filled and alive, enlightening and even cruel than the relationship between the instinctive and reflective principles. It is the human being’s privilege not to be locked in a situation with rigid reactions to every impression and to have the most extreme opposites living openly, where the possibilities for freedom may appear. But what do human beings do in this free room? Is the tension so unbearably powerful that he throws himself into an extreme, human-animal condition? So he becomes a total marionette determined by forces outside himself? Or does he awaken to a new, strengthened expression of the genuine human being where the fullness of the picture-creating ability awakens in a clear, pure form enlightened by the clarity of conceptual thinking?

In all areas of our culture this will be fought out: in the artistic, the scientific and the religious. Especially important will be the battles for this human quality that we take on while raising and educating our children.



Remembering and Imagining

by

Jørgen Smit

Remembering and imagining are two foundations for our soul life. They are so encompassing and important that we have already described a very large part of a person's uniqueness if we can tell what his abilities to remember and to imagine really are. They determine so much that they can be used as the basis for a typological description of human beings. For example:

1. The Remembering Type: He remembers everything easily and has an unlimited ability to collect results from his experiences. He has a “photographic memory” that stores both important and unimportant details. When he draws, paints or writes, it is very difficult for him to find something new or original. But if he is given an example, he copies it with great joy and detail. When he played as a child, he preferred that others decided what to do. When he leads as an adult, it is quickly apparent that others lead for him.

This type is the receptive and dependent human being—the scientist as far as he limits himself to collecting facts, the bureaucrat, who becomes confused if a new case appears that does not fit in his scheme of things or when he is required to act with a flexible imagination. He is the subordinate worker, no matter what profession, who must be guided along when he must deal with a new situation that is not identical to the last one he mastered.

2. The Imaginative Type: He bubbles over with ideas and intentions. If given an example, he may look at it but he will not usually follow; rather, he will make something new. When it is necessary to be accurate, he is not always able to answer correctly. Without even knowing it, he has already changed and colored it!

3. The Passive Combination Type: With his power of imagination he moves beyond the existing conditions but is unable to create something new. Memories are cloudy, and he is not capable of calling up relevant facts. He is the romantic daydreamer who lives in his imaginative castles that never become real.

4. The Great Ingenious Prominent Figures: These people have both abilities in rich variations, for example: Goethe, Shakespeare, da Vinci, Mozart, Brahe, Kepler, Ford, Alexander the Great, Caesar.

5. The Rest: There is an entire scale of somewhat evenly dispersed abilities, without ingeniously great forces of remembering or imagining. These are the many-talented, respectable, practical people: the inventive housewife, the enterprising club leader, artists, craftsmen, technicians and scientists, all who are able to move in new directions.

But life is never as simple as just five categories. Remembering and imagining cover a number of different fields of activity, and their activities are not spread out evenly. For example: He, who has the power of imagination when dealing with colors or forms, may be totally unproductive in the worlds of sound and words; he who is obviously without imagination in regard to color, forms, sounds and words may still be a sparkling source of new ideas in business; or he who may be just the opposite.

Likewise with the various fields of remembering: Some learn verses by heart merely by reading or hearing them a couple of times. Others can try to memorize a poem a hundred times and remain unsuccessful, but if asked about dates or telephone numbers, suddenly the correct numbers sprinkle out of them, one after the other. Yet another type has the greatest difficulty remembering verses, names, melodies and numbers but can

recall pictures colorfully, dramatically and in great detail, as if they were recently experienced.

Every single person has his or her own unique ability to remember, his own ability to imagine, colored by his individual being. Therefore when psychology presents different, schematically limited types of remembering and imagining and then a series of types of combinations, we become very tired of all of these types, for life is so much more endlessly rich. The limitless and colorful richness in the human soul's diversity cannot replace the personal experiences we have individually and with others.

Remembering and imagining are two basic forces that are aimed in opposite directions and therefore supplement each other much like inhaling and exhaling direct our breathing processes.

Remembering's ideal is to re-experience something as completely as possible so the original experience appears in all of its details without adding or subtracting anything, but in clarified form. Otherwise you would be hypnotized or possessed by the previous experience. The pictures from remembering shall be ordered, clarified, objectified and understood as well as possible. All chaotic and cloudy conditions make the picture-remembering less complete. Remembering is our organ of the past.

Imagination, to the contrary, is not connected with a specific past. It uses what it will and forms everything new. The ability to imagine is free-reigning, picture-creating, picture-forming. It creates something in our inner life that may also appear in the outer world in the future. Its ideal is the sparkling well that never dries out and where people wait excitedly for something new to appear. When compared to the clarified pictures from remembering, it makes an impression of being chaotic and cloudy—not because it is messy, but because imagination so sumptuously brings out the fullness of sprouting life. Further, at the beginning of the creative process, it is not clear what will finally appear in the future.

Imagination is our organ of the future.

Every time we create something new in our own daily activities, imagination has been active. We have not merely repeated what took place before, retained in memory and followed by well-practiced habits. In

our inner life we have boldly formed pictures of something new that will become real.

While remembering entails thinking reflections combined with feelings in the background, imagining has a productive, creative element of willpower, and it springs from a strong enthusiasm for something new. In Greek mythology we find both figures: two Titan brothers who in dramatic pictures allow both forces in the human soul to appear:

Epimetheus always thinks afterwards (*epi*). In well-arranged symmetry he receives and orders the results of passive observation. Objectively and peacefully he sits and views the entire world as a beautiful tableau that is neither changed nor influenced by what he remembers. He conserves all of the world's wisdom, and all of the treasures in nature exist already. But he creates nothing. He is the original picture of the power of remembering. We can best imagine Epimetheus at sunset when we look back over what happened that day.

To the contrary, Prometheus steals the gods' fire, and not to observe it and conserve it. He uses fire for newly created actions. From within the darkness of the night, Prometheus arrives before the sunrise carrying a flaming torch. He does not regard what has been. His entire being is directed at what will be. And it is he, Prometheus, who will carry out the works. He does not think afterwards, but before (*pro*). He is therefore the father of all cultural progress, all artists and all technical inventors.

No matter how different imagination and remembering are, we should not forget that they work into each other. They cannot survive without help the other. Epimetheus and Prometheus are brothers.

Let us take an example of remembering: What was the name of the French politician who appeared again and again from the first days of the great revolution, through all of the upheaval to the July revolution? Like a cork he floated to the surface with new governments? Maybe you know the name. Or you can tell us immediately. Let us assume you do not recall. What do you do? You struggle to find the right memory and the wrinkles on your forehead appear! You create trial mental images. Pieces of memory appear: his peculiar nose, his shining eyes. But the name? What was his name? Talbaud, no; Trenardier, no; Trevaljand, no. And then the name finally pops into memory: Talleyrand—of course! As soon as the name is there and the evidence is absolute, all of the false

imaginative, mental images disappear. But imagination was used to serve remembering.

We always use imagination to help in remembering. Imagination helps us both make our memories and recall our memories. Most importantly, imagining helps us fill the holes in our memory, for the memories must be whole if we are to hold onto them well. We color and form all of our memories with the power of our imagination. If we remove imagination, our memories become like pale, lifeless leaves that disappear. We would not be able to remember anything, unless we had an automatic electronic brain—but then we would no longer be human beings.

Perhaps you would argue that remembering needs help from imagining only when concerned with pictures but not numbers. This is how it might appear at first, but with numbers there is still the picture element, just standing in the background and reduced to a minimum. If you look closely you will find it. If you want to hold onto numbers, you need to see them and you need to see them in relation to each other within the greater world of numbers. The more you can walk and hop around in that world, the easier you can retain an accurate memory of the numbers. The ability to live with numbers also depends on our power of imagination.

The power of imagination is like an emerging stream of blood that keeps our ability to remember alive. Without imagination our memories die. And our imagination would be helpless without the ability to remember. This becomes even clearer when we look at an extreme case of strong imagination with no memory. Then, the minute they appeared, all of the experiences would immediately disappear into darkness. There would be no way of looking backwards into the events. New possibilities would flow forward, uncontrollably, nothing held onto, no continuity. Without our memory's ability to hold continuity, the uncontrolled activities of imagining would be lost in bottomless chaos.

Just as imagining is memory's enlivening helper, so is remembering the basis for imagination. Therefore we always have a little power of imagination in our remembering, even if we think it is pale and sterilized. And there is always a little structure from remembering in our imagination, even in the most chaotic and wild activities. Both of these forces are active in every person.

Imaging and remembering are fundamental forces in all education of children. Both are equally important. Yet the greatest and most widespread mistake in education is to appeal mainly to the ability to remember and shelve imagining as a secondary, entertainment-like activity on the side. This is as limiting as only breathing in and never breathing out! Likewise, if you ignore remembering and merely accept imagining, you would be just as limited.

But it is much harder to enliven imagination so it grows and develops into “exact imagining.” This is the teacher’s task in every subject and in every lesson. If the teacher is able to practice this great art, to grasp the content of the subject with imagining’s enlivening and inspiring power, then it is not difficult to allow the pendulum in breathing to appear. With enthusiasm the children remember what appears when they were imagining. And with enthusiasm they can provide order and a clear relationship by developing the relevant concept.

Every school day should have both of these elements: summarizing, clarifying exercises in remembering during which the previous day’s products are ordered, digested and understood; but also a new effort, experiencing something new and foreign, always with the power of imagining.

Can a teacher learn to do this? Can we learn to develop and put to use our power of imagining? Only by practicing and practicing will small sprouts appear from within.

A systematic, scientific description of imagining is already a self-contradiction. It can be compared to a pressed flower or a butterfly on pin. For imaging is not so systematically conscious. It is not well defined and ordered. Its core is the over-flowing life, the primal forest of surprises, and the wide-eyed wonder over unimaginatively great realities, the warm enthusiasm and joy over becoming one with things!

When imagination has been productive, we can look back upon it and discover some inherent order. We look back by remembering our observations.

I would like to indicate some of the imagining activities that are central for education. In the *Iliad*, Homer describes everything on Achilles’ enormous shield, but he does not do it from the finished shield. Rather, he does it by following the creation of the shield at Hephaestus’

forge. We “watch” how the actual pictures spring from his talented hammer.

This is the original picture for the art of storytelling! Every static description of a final state (this is it.... and that is that.... and it is like this...) is boring, but if one follows the living process, the wings of imagination will unfold. We become creative in how it emerges.

A bold philosopher once stated that imagining is the creative power that is the basis for the creation of nature. It must have been someone who could dive into the living reality of things, for no passive observer would be able to say that.

Another redeeming element is the effects of contrasts. For example, if you have taken the time to deepen your experience of a heavy, vegetative, and digesting cow on a succulent, green field—to the extent of becoming sleepy and heavy from constant chewing—how strong does that appear in the imagination when you contrast it with the experience of an eagle soaring over the mountain tops with the sharp, awakened eye, observing the smallest creature on the earth below? Or, how intense does the tropical rainforest with its overwhelming life compare with the ice cold and deadly polar region?

Just as paintings display contrasts between colors, light and darkness so does music present a tense relationship between tones. All imagination flows rhythmically between opposing experiences. Imagining is the most alive faculty in the human soul. It has the entire register of sorrow, joy, tragedy and humor.

If a teacher can develop pictures that allow the subject to appear more vividly, the core of the art of education unfolds. When that element is present the teacher has appealed to something in the children that they experience naturally. They have an abundance of imagination, but it is generally chaotic.

If the teacher stands before a class and explains, dead-seriously, some complicated grammar at the blackboard, perhaps the entire class follows attentively and excitedly only because the students notice a wet mark from the sponge that resembles a face with a long nose!

Let us look more closely at that nose. Consider that the teacher had drawn a face with exactly the same long nose; it would have drawn some attention from the class. But there is another, more liberating interest

for the form from the wet sponge. It is an indication and the children's own imagination is put to use. With inner joy the children's imagination completes the picture.

Here we have one of the many secret arts of imagining: the art of indicating, that opens endless opportunities. This is a condensed sketch, like a seed with the latent possibility of becoming a full-grown oak tree:

“What crashed so loudly?”

“Norway by your hand, King!”

And language, the human being's unconscious, imagination-creating activity, is filled with such indicating, imagination-redeeming pictures: “My legs are black and blue.” Why are they black and blue? And how incomplete that description is. “Black” and “blue” work together with the power of alliteration and awaken a lively, imaginative picture of the legs.

The art of exaggeration is one of the hardest: “He broke every bone in his body!” Wrong! He could not break every bone in his body. Yet with this exaggeration, the core of the experience can be pictured. But one must be careful not to go too far or the effect is ruined.

Just as there are many secret arts to storytelling, so are there many possibilities and dangers within education. Take, for example, drawing on the blackboard. The exact and accurate board drawing is an effective way to explain a situation, but if it is to awaken imagination, two other agents must appear. Either the picture is not only correct, but receives color and form so that a larger reality is indicated. Or you must not form it completely. For example, a partial gesture with the hand on the drawing is enough to set a child's imagination in swing.

The art of education is comparable to swimming in a huge sea. While you are on land you can practice your swimming strokes. But you must throw yourself out into the deep if you want to learn how to swim. You must be prepared to have your head under water many times and completely forget your swimming skills before you learn the royal art of education in real practice.



The Youth of Our Day

by

Jørgen Smit

All over the world during the past decades the problems facing youth have reached center stage. Youth violence is often in the news. The older generation is helpless in relation to both “criminal” youth and the more legal ones.

What do youth really want? Is it a revolution against all of the “old ways” or do they want something new? Many observe the way youth react to society from purely pathological perspectives. They say, “Youth do not want anything new at all. The youth today are sick. We need to find the cause and prepare a cure.”

Others believe there is no special problem with youth. Youth have always acted this way from time to time. The only thing that has changed is the outer form, which is now considered modern.

Often Socrates is quoted (from roughly 400 BC): “Our youth love luxury. They have bad manners; they have contempt for authority and no respect for their elders. The children of our times are tyrants. They do not stand up when older people come in the room. They talk back to their parents, chatter when others are present, gulp down food and tyrannize their teachers.” Already 2400 years ago!

Now it is very superficial to simply say: That is the way it was when Socrates lived. It has always been that way. No, it has not always been that way.

First of all, it is not difficult to prove that in the course of history, there have been many movements that swing back and forth many times

between a strict education and a slower arbitrariness. Secondly, youth opposition and youth disturbances on a large scale appear every time a culture has passed its zenith. As long as a culture is new and “young,” it progresses forward and the youth work together with their elders’ initiatives. Only when there is something old, something that has been that the elders want to retain, do the youth oppose them instinctively. They want to create something new.

Once we have considered all of these general observations, are the problems of youth sufficiently illuminated? Or does something remain that is perhaps the most important topic of all?

Over the past sixty years a displacement in maturing has taken place so physical/sexual maturity occurs two or more years earlier than in the past. If the age for soul maturity or personality development were correspondently displaced, the health of our youth would be less endangered or changed. It would be simply a displacement in time. But that is not the case. To the contrary, the soul maturity of youth has also been displaced, but in the opposite direction. It is delayed.

The result is that a youth’s total situation is more vulnerable than ever before. They become physically mature without the corresponding grownup soul maturity. Further, in this extremely sensitive and vulnerable situation, our youth are exposed to a storm of impressions from the outside—advertisements, film, newspapers, TV and computer games—and more overwhelmingly, from a technological world of motorcycles, airplanes and cars.

Therefore our youth have a different starting point than previous youth. While the inner condition is more influenced, more exposed and more immature than previously, the outer situation is more aggressive, more disharmonious and confusing than earlier.

In social life youth meet an exaggerated specialization and automatization. The ideal is that society shall function as a well-greased machine, wherein the separate parts function with full precision.

In a recent newspaper article, a doctor reported the following incident: One evening he arrived at an accident. A trailer had hit a man. The police made sure the people who arrived at the scene were kept at a distance. In the middle of the crowd lay the injured man but no one was attending him. The doctor raced forward but it was too late. The loss of blood was too

great. A simple bandage would have saved his life, but no one thought of it, not the police nor anyone in the crowd. He was to be taken to the clinic. The doctor arrived surprisingly quickly but he was a few minutes too late.

This is obviously an exaggerated example, but it shows a basic attitude among the general public: Hold back and let the paid specialists do the work. The spontaneous, voluntary, unpaid humane effort has become more the exception. More often it is considered strange and even laughable, not to mention liable. “What do you have to do with this? Is it your job? Are you paid overtime?”

That is not the youth but the adults who are speaking. It is the elder generation that has formed society so this tendency dominates. It is the necessary consequence of a society that does everything possible to be totally automated.

Is this the whole story? Do the youth have anything to offer in contrast to the perfect, automatic machine that runs society? Yes, they do. And this is where their so-called rebellion enters the picture. The uncontrolled explosions of joy in destroying things are not directed at a certain goal because there is nothing specific they want to destroy. It is not rebellion against a particular tyrant. In that case it would have to be against the well-greased machine we call society. It is not due to social repression or social suffering. Often the most well-off youth are the leaders.

It is the unbelievable love for speed. You cannot buy it. If so it would be very expensive. But it is wild, dangerous, meaningless and therefore very tempting for youth who actually long to act with zeal and conviction, a fully defined activity with no compromise involved, by which they can challenge their limits, their entire existence.

The uncontrollable, anarchistic, excessive actions—in destructive rage, outrageous speed or sexual experimentation—must be seen against a background of the nihilistic worldview that the elder generation presents to the younger generation in thoughts, words and actions—two world wars with increasing destruction and a threatened third world war with unimaginable consequences for all mankind. The elder generation created this. Instead youth are offered a more or less well-paid job with full retirement benefits. This is the starting point for our youth?

The logical consequence should be that youth say: We want to do it completely differently than the elder generation. We have no reason to

seek revenge from them. They are not worth it. And we have nothing to learn from them.

Where is the new, positive direction in which youth may head fully committed, with no fear and where they can engage all of their disposable forces? Did the Nazis have it? Some of Europe's youth believed so and engaged fully. They were disappointed and Nazism was exposed in all of its gruesome inhumanity. Did the communists have it? Another group of youth thought so and entered it with no reservations. It too was also exposed in all of its relativism and merciless tactic.

Where are the unconditional, wholesome ideals? If youth in a nihilistic society discover an ideal they can totally connect with, there are two other alternatives they can be led into unconsciously. One alternative is the well-known excessive experiences that affect them almost ecstatically in short-lived explosions of joy. The other is to find the best insured, bourgeois job where one aims at holding all of the world's problems at a distance from one's own private life, and pretend that problems do not exist because one chooses not to see them, like an ostrich that hides its head in the sand because it is afraid.

James Dean was killed in a car accident at the age of twenty-four. The person driving towards him caused the collision. Dean did nothing wrong other than drive at an outrageous speed. For many years before and after the accident, he was the number one idol in Europe and America. People admired him like a god. In many cases you could consider it a James Dean "psychosis." Such ideal idols are typical among youth. Youth want ideals. Without genuine ideals youth lose themselves and turn old at an early age.

Who is considered an ideal is no coincidence. If you know who a youth's ideal is or what their ideal is, you have already learned very much about that person. In the ideal you recognize yourself on a larger, more refined scale. In the ideal you view hidden possibilities that are not yet achieved. In the ideal you feel your deepest life force strengthened.

What was James Dean's life like? He lost his mother at the age of nine. It was as if his entire life broke into pieces. From that point on he was derailed. Who of today's youth are not derailed in one way or another? Who are not in reality or in a deeper sense "parentless" in our day? He wanders restlessly from one activity to the next. His talents show great promise. But where will he find what he really wants to do? All the time he longs for something new, for the "real" goal.

Which of our youth does not have this restless striving, this longing? For a young, vibrant youth, would not a specialized profession be merely a narrow room that in truth would only increase his eternal longing?

Every youth that is not yet broken or faded has this eternal longing deep within his soul. If it is not acknowledged and grasped consciously, it must break down all barriers and run amok in wildness.

James Dean fought desperately with this. His friend, Will Bast wrote down the following text about him:

I want to grow out of this totally meaningless, little world that we live in. I want to leave it all behind, all these narrow thoughts on meaningless, small things—things that will be forgotten a hundred years from now. SOMEWHERE THERE IS A PLACE WHERE EVERYTHING IS HUGE AND MEANINGFUL. I will try to achieve that level and find a place where I can approach completion, a place where this whole dirty world should be, could be, if we took the time to learn.

To a friend who wrote television programs, Dean said:

You move too fast, you always talk about sales and who has an idea that can be sold. You should rather try to write without ulterior motives. That work is more important. It is the only way you will find what you are longing for. Satisfaction lies in creative activity, in work, not in final results.

The last words to his friend Will Bast before the car accident were: “Never forget that what is meaningful is not visible to the eye.” This was not an accidental, spirit-filled comment. It was a basic truth that he reached through many battles in life and which he expressed differently in the following radical, apparently nihilistic, but in truth consequent and brave comment: “Death is the only thing that remains that deserves respect. It is the only unavoidable, undeniable truth. Everything else we can doubt. But death is the truth. Within it lies mankind’s only nobility. And after that mankind’s only hope.”

Throughout James Dean’s short life we find a feverish, restless striving, an inextinguishable ideal flame that burned inside him.

Everything that appears “to the eye” was for him a mask. In distain he threw off mask after mask. But what is the ideal? For him all moral and religious ideals that are passed down were empty phrases. Haven’t the elder generation’s results already irrevocably proven that? But he cannot throw away the ideal force. To do so, he would have to throw himself away. When the ideal force does not find new content but merely burns, it is consuming. All it longs for is, in reality, death that destroys all masks.

In James Dean we find at a climax, on a larger scale, the problems that arise within the desperate starting point for the youth of our day. We cannot expect that a large majority of youth will pass through this catastrophic situation without a partially crippled condition, where the human core is lost or is repressed for a long time. We can expect nothing more than the desire to disappear in a crowd, a tribe that appears attractive when youth are faced with a life situation where the essential takes place in their own inner lives, “invisible to their eyes,” continually standing face to face with death that destroys all masks and empty words.

With that much more tension and expectations, we must look to the few youth in our day who have the power to go through this crisis with their entire humanity intact, safe and sound. They will have passed through a “trial of youth,” a purification that no previous generation has had to pass through.

In ancient times (and today in native tribes) youth were forced to go through challenging, bodily torment before they were accepted into adult society. These practices belong in the past. But the trials our youth experience today are in truth harder and more revolutionary than ever before. They lie within the entire life situation. Those who pass the trial are those who will create the core of mankind’s further development. They will be known in the coming centuries. They are the few who take their inner development, their inner self-education in their own hands. They are the few who, in the midst of daily turmoil, victories and defeats, find the *place where everything is huge and meaningful*.

There you can be a whole human being. There you find the productive area where the entire future is before you and within you, because it relates to the future like the seeds of a plant relate to the plant’s entire life. There you find the place where people meet other people who are also on the way to creating the future and where everyone is “young,” whether they live many years after birth or not.

In this place the generations work together. It is the place where the culture of our day is not a decadent culture or a culture that has passed its zenith. In this place the culture of our age is part of a “young,” developing epoch that is just beginning to unfold.

