SIR HERBERT READ ON ART AND INTELLECT

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I

The question of concern in this paper is whether Sir Herbert Read's ideas about art and education, and the connection between them, may properly be called "anti-intellectual." This is not an uncommon charge or suspicion, I believe, because there are elements in his writing that seem, *prima facie,* to support it. This question is worth discussing because of the enormous influence and prestige Herbert Read has had, primarily in art education circles (though one should also remember that, by his own account, his argument is concerned with the whole of education and is addressed to all educators). If such a suspicion were well-grounded, it would be sufficient to dismiss any educational theory from further serious consideration since it is widely agreed that education has to do with the development of intellect, whatever else it does.

Of course, there is a vagueness about this "anti-intellectual" charge just as it stands, but it seems more economic for me to try to clear it up as I proceed rather than at the outset. My conclusion will be that the suspicion is not justified, with some exceptions and provided we are willing to construe "anti-intellectual" in Read's (not unusual) sense.

II

One might start by noticing that Read is hostile to the domination of life by the abstract and discursive forms of reason. Such hostility is a dominant theme in his discussions, whether of art, morals, politics, or education. When speaking of the nature of art, which is the wellspring of his ideas on all other topics, he sometimes opposes "instinct" to "intellect," to the disadvantage of the latter. For example:

> The whole evidence of the history of art goes to show that the moment art is yoked to these intellectual and moralistic values, it tends to decay. For there is a fundamental opposition between instinctual values and what for short we may term conventional values. . . .
> (*Art and Society,* Pantheon Books, 1945, p. 100.)

In fact, Read does not hesitate to find a "fundamental opposition" between many conventional values and those he wishes to advocate; to take a few examples, between intellect and instinct, memory and imagination, rationality and intuition, character and personality, discursive and nondiscursive, even between verbal and nonverbal. Some of these are illustrated in the following passage on education which, I think, is a fair example in its tone and sweep of his hostility:

> My general contention is that a system of education which aims at the creation of a uniform pattern of culture only ends by producing a widespread neurosis within the structure of society. The system of education, as it has developed in Europe during the course of the last hundred years and more, has concentrated exclusively on the cultivation of logical habits of thought and the orderly acquisi-

> tion of facts. Memory rather than imagination has been its ideal, and its tendency has been to insist on an ethical concept of character rather than a balance or integration of the individual personality. Children have been treated as so much plastic material which could be moulded into static forms, instead of as extremely active centres of dynamic forces whose gears easily get jammed.
> (*The Grass Roots of Art,* Cleveland: Meridian Books, 1961, p. 30.)

The cumulative effect of this kind of writing may appear to lend color to the charge of "anti-intellectualism," but this would be deceptive. Here and elsewhere Read is hostile not to intellect as such, but to the domination of certain intellectual forms over the rest of life.[1] It is not that art is nonintellectual, but that it should not be "yoked" to the "intellectual and moralistic." And in education, he does not object to teaching "logical habits of thought" but that we have "concentrated exclusively" upon this. Read objects vehemently to the exclusiveness and not to the logical habits themselves. In general he is not hostile to the abstract and discursively formulated products of rationality as such, but only to the excessive importance attached to them. Of course, it may require more than a simple assertion for me to establish this point for the sceptic, and I hope that adequate substantiation will be found in what follows. The reason for Read's hostility toward conventional values (exclusive concentration on the discursive) is that they ignore much that is at least as important and perhaps more "fundamental." He believes that the instinctive or intuitive elements of life represented by "art" should play a much larger and more important role in education and society than we have allowed. Moreover, as we shall see, these latter elements are not to be conceived as other than intellectual themselves. According to Read, "art" is intimately bound to the perception of meaning and the development of mind. This is to say that the "fundamental" character of the opposition between (say) rationality and intuition is not to be taken too literally: both are parts of the unity of mind.

It is true that at times this unity tends to be obscured in Read's writings by his stress on the opposition (as above). There are at least two general reasons for this. The first is that in writing about art Read is usually concerned with definitions, with statements of the "essence" of art. He rarely talks as though art is difficult or requires previous reflection. Instead he emphasizes the unreflective and spontaneous character of art, which is what, in Read's view, makes art what it is. But any suggestion that he underestimates the prolonged effort required of the great artist can be refuted by a glance at his introduction to a volume of Henry Moore's drawings, where he describes and analyses the value of Moore's long study of the natural forms of various kinds of stone.[2] The reason that this is not typical of his writing is that he usually has a different purpose: not to explain the work of a particular artist, but to try to say what is general in art. Nowadays this might be thought a rather old fashioned endeavour, and even a misguided one; but, in spite of Weitz, Kennick, and others,[3] any serious attempt to show that it is misguided must surely demonstrate why Read has not succeeded.

The second general reason for a certain deceptiveness in Read's writing as to the intellectual character of art is that he is distressed by the common belief that art is the product of reflective consciousness. His efforts to combat this belief by stressing the spontaneity of art often lead to the impression that reflective thinking is quite incompatible with the activity of art, and that the latter has no intellectual elements at

all. Moreover, these efforts are due to Read's desire not merely to establish the truth about art, but also to change the situation, above all to improve education. Consequently he writes more as reformer and prophet than as philosopher, and distinctions not immediately germane are assumed rather than articulated.

III

I have not yet said anything to persuade the sceptic that my interpretation of Read's attitude toward intellect is correct. This requires some discussion of his theory of art. The following is a brief exposition of what I take to be the main thrust of his theories. It is brief because his interpretation of the nature of art is traditional rather than original. It is true that it remains uncertain whether one is interpreting Read correctly in any particular case, for he is not the clearest writer, and he deliberately eschews system. In addition he relies on wide and extensive quotation without indicating how much of the conceptual framework of the quoted writer he is willing to accept. Yet he has written voluminously on art, and if we stick to the major points, I think that what follows is a fair account, and that the quotations cited are representative of the mass of his writing. A few passages that seem to constitute relevant exceptions will be discussed in the fourth section of this paper.

Read's books are filled with attempts to define "art." He seems to say that the word must be understood, in its most basic sense, as referring to an activity of mind rather than to its products. By its nature, this activity is not limited to particular media; "art" has to do with painting, of course, and with music, literature, and architecture, and also with the dance, mathematics, gardening, conversation, and baseball. There is no activity of man which may not at times be a vehicle for the activity of art, though some may be more suited to it than others.

Read's most usual way of describing this activity is to say that it is the creation or discovery of form. "Form" in general refers to what is discriminable or intelligible in an object; the opposite is chaos. Hence to create or discover the form of some object is to come to know it, or perceive it, with a clarity and distinctness beyond the normal. This leads to knowledge of the particularity of the object. Read agrees with Bergson, whom he quotes approvingly, that in everyday life we recognize rather than perceive things as they are; that is, forms previously discovered by the activity of the mind tend to persist and impose themselves on situations where they may be useful but not exact. The language of prose is such set of simplified or abstracted forms used to promote recognition of situations rather than perception of their exact particularities. The language of science and mathematics is a further abstraction from reality, and consequently conveys less truth than art; they are "fictions," as Croce called them. Therefore art has more of cognition in it than does science; it struggles against misleading simplification, the "critic of abstractions." In sum, art has cognitive value because it is the direct knowledge of reality.

Sometimes Read gives the impression that he intends "form" in a rather more limited sense, for instance, when he defines it in terms of the shapes assumed by unimpeded growth or change in nature, such as the honeycomb and the bamboo shoot, at the beginning of *Education Through Art*.[4] In this more limited and classical sense, form seems to refer to the clarity of the flowing line, to a symmetrical or balanced composition, or to the ready intelligibility of the already partly

abstracted. In this sense, form is "metrical" (*E.T.A.* p. 35), meaning that it illustrates "universal laws of proportion and rhythm," and avoids the irrational or peculiar. Thus Read speaks of Beauty as a "formal" perfection, and of Neolithic art as a record of the discovery of "form" itself.

But it is clear that "form" in this sense is a special case of the more general sense in which art is said to be the creation or discovery of form. According to Read, beauty is not the only virtue of art: there is (at least) also vitality, which is the vivid and intense presentation of character exemplified, for instance, in Paleolithic art.[5] Intelligibility, therefore, is not limited to what is "metrical." This distinction explains such a passage as:

> Works of art, of whatever kind, give aesthetic pleasure when they illustrate universal laws of proportion and rhythm; that is, harmonic intervals of space and time. A work of art may do more than this—it may communicate intuitions or thoughts—but unless it has some basic harmonic form it is not a work of art. Such harmony need not necessarily be simple: indeed, as Bacon said, "there is no excellent beauty that hath not some strangeness in the proportion," a qualification, however, which Plato might have found difficult to admit.
> (*Education for Peace,* New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1949, p. 99.)

What Read means by "simple" here is what he meant by "metrical" elsewhere: the intelligibility of the partially abstracted. What Bacon means by "strangeness" is the particularity of things, the wartiness of nature, which may be intelligible in art but which escapes the categories with which we might try to describe it discursively. The general sense of "form," in terms of which art is defined, will include much more than clarity of outline and harmony of parts; it may include fogged colors, mysterious blurs, anything strange, intense, ill-balanced, vague. It refers to anything recognized as having any quality, the quality recognized being inseparable from the form.

It follows that perception (when it is not mere recognition) is the activity of art at its most basic level (*The Redemption of the Robot,* New York: Trident Press, 1966, p. 170). Read likes to quote from the Gestalt psychologists to the effect that perception is indeed the refusal of chaos.[6] Moreover, he would add, if there is ever a case where the perceiver has no work to do, no discovery to make, it is a case of recognition and not perception. One always has to struggle to perceive without the prejudice of prior formulation, to avoid imposing forms already understood on what is still to be explored. The effort of art, and also of education, should be to maintain the power to see things freshly, or, as Read characteristically puts it, to preserve "the innocent eye." Thus in a famous passage from the book with that title he says:

> The only real experiences in life are those lived with a virgin sensibility—so that we only hear a tone once, only see a colour once, see, hear, touch, taste and smell everything once, the first time. All life is an echo of our first sensations, and we build up our consciousness, our whole mental life, by variations and combinations of these elementary sensations.
> (*The Innocent Eye,* London: Faber and Faber, 1933, pp. 12-13.)

This may seem to make education a very negative business. But Read does not mean "virgin sensibility," to be inexperienced. Rather, it experiences nothing as being the same as something previously experienced. All situations are unique, and if one is alert one sees them so. All colors are unique and may be seen for the first time; only the tired eye sees anything for the second time. One retains one's "innocent eye,"

therefore, not by remaining childish, but by developing one's powers of discrimination. The general method, at its simplest, is to pay attention.

At other times Read uses the language of the expression theory of art to convey much the same idea about the intellectual status of art activity. It is true that in the previous quotation Read seems to say that a work of art may express "intuitions or thoughts," and that if it does this, it is in addition to having a form in the sense described. This implies that "expression" and "having form" are different things, and that only the latter is necessary in art. These implications, however, do not square with his customary usage, in which the "expression of emotion" and the "discovery of form" are merely alternative ways of describing the same activity. The reason for this is that in Read's view emotions do not exist out of a context; they always (perhaps even in pathological cases) have reference to some feature of the world (*The True Voice of Feeling,* Pantheon Books, 1953, p. 21). To express an emotion, as with Collingwood and Croce, is to clarify it, to come to know its character. Beforehand, there is at best a vague and unformed feeling; afterwards, something clear, intelligible, and directed. This definition is achieved by making discriminations of the qualities of the object towards which it is directed, or by constructing such an object. In this way, to clarify an emotion is also to become clearer about the object, which is how the discovery of its form is also to be interpreted (*English Prose Style,* Pantheon Books, 1952, p. 164). It is not hard to see, then, how the intuition of a particular may also be described as the expression of an emotion.

It is true that, according to Read, art may be said to express other things in addition to emotions; for example in the passage below, "emotion, mood, idea, intuition." Read makes these additions because he lacks a systematic theory of mind, and he is concerned that we should not miss the point that expression is not a purely subjective and noncognitive matter. Common usage puts "emotive" in opposition to "cognitive," and he feels that he cannot rely solely on the word "emotion" to convey the variety of kinds of things that art is a coming to know (*Grass Roots of Art,* p. 91). These points are illustrated in the following passage:

> Consciousness . . . does not exist apart from the object we are conscious of; but we can induce consciousness by seeking a correlative for feeling (emotion, mood, idea, intuition). That is essentially what the artistic process amounts to: it is the presentation to consciousness of an exact correlative for feeling, but the correlative presented to consciousness is always a concrete object, a plastic configuration, sounds, colours, shapes, masses accessible to sensation. The object the artist creates, therefore, corresponds to his state of consciousness: it is his consciousness of that object; it was not first present *in* consciousness, and then expelled like an egg: it grew into consciousness as it germinated, as it was plastically formed. (*The Forms of Things Unknown: Essays Towards an Aesthetic Philosophy,* Cleveland: Meridian Books, 1963, pp. 26-27.)

This passage also contains a point that may not seem altogether compatible with what has gone before; for to say that an artist must create an "exact correlative for feeling" (an echo of Eliot) that is "accessible to sensation" may not seem wholly compatible with the notion that perception may be an example of the activity of art. It may be possible to reconcile these two emphases, but it is worth noticing that they are somewhat different. The first may be said to be Bergsonian in tendency, the second Crocean. The first sees art as the direct perception of reality, the second as the

construction of a symbol of reality. In this latter case, reality is inaccessible until it is represented for contemplation in some public ("accessible to sensation") medium. Read's use of psychoanalytic theories provide a good illustration of this: the contents of the id are by definition inaccessible and unintelligible and may become known only by finding symbolic representation in dream, myth, behavior, etc. Where such manifestations of the unconscious are symbolic (have meaning for the individual), their construction and scrutiny is a case of the activity of art (*E.T.A.* Chapter Six). Art may thus grandly be said to be the exploration of the unconscious; but it is clear that the unconscious is not known directly, rather only by symbolic representation. Similarly, Read says that artists such as Gabo and Mondrian symbolize "the structures of the universe," especially the categories of space and time which would otherwise remain inaccessible to contemplation (*The Philosophy of Modern Art*, Chapter Thirteen).

Read here is close to the position of Susanne Langer, though he does not often lay a similar stress on the importance of the particular medium. Art, as I have said, is not in his view limited to work in specific media; it remains, rather, any work that initiates or discovers meaning in any way. To create a symbol is to create new meanings, and according to Read there is no reason why the kind of symbol should be limited in advance. On the other hand, Read does seem to agree with Langer that art has to do with only nondiscursive or "unconsummated" symbols. This means that the forms of art, whether auditory, visual, or verbal, are not, as such, parts of conventional meaning systems, as, for instance, ordinary words are. If they were, they could not be said to initiate meaning, for the elements of a discursive language have their meanings to a large extent fixed in advance. This is perhaps another way of saying that art is not the product of the reflective intellect; rather, the conceptual life of the reflective intellect is in some sense dependent for its material on the images of art. Whatever this sense is (and Read never makes this quite clear), it is in effect the heart of his defense of the importance of art in education.

This view does not exclude the use of conventional symbols as elements of the form of the work of art. Otherwise poetry, for instance, would not be art. But the conventional symbol is not then properly responded to merely in its conventional terms of preassigned meanings, but rather as a part with a meaning derived from its position in the whole. Croce's example is a philosophic speech put in the mouth of a dramatic character which is intended to add an element to that character, to be responded to not simply as philosophy but as characteristic of the *dramatis persona*.[7] Read characteristically supposes that there is no kind of discursive material in principle which cannot be absorbed into an image of art.

We may say, then, that Read does not distinguish (if the distinction should be made) between art as the direct perception of reality and art as symbolic of reality. In terms of this brief account of the main lines of his aesthetics, however, it is clear that in either case art is a cognitive affair. It is an intellectual, though not a reflective, activity. For this reason art is therefore valuable in education in its own right, and because it is the foundation for the proper working of the reflective intellect. On these grounds, Read's claims may perhaps be false, invalid, or tautological, but they cannot justly be called anti-intellectual.

IV

I think that it would be hard to deny the foregoing as representative of the main tendencies of the overwhelming part of Read's work. But it would be equally hard to deny that passages can be found in his writings which do not harmonize easily with this interpretation, and that might be thought to lend substance to the charge of anti-intellectualism. I shall discuss one or two of these briefly.

There is Read's frequent claim (e.g., on pages 1, 10, 61, 283, 303 of *E.T.A.*) that he no more than restates Plato's argument concerning the role of art in the educative process. This is misleading! It is true that both Read and Plato are convinced of the importance of art in society and in education; but they have different theories of what art is, and their arguments and recommendations differ widely. This can be seen from the simple fact that Plato insisted on the necessity of censorship of the arts by the State. The chief virtue of the arts in education, according to Plato, is through their glamor to infect the soul with virtue; but he also felt that their glamor was a dim and not very trustworthy reflection of truth. Left to themselves, the arts could mislead as easily as not; hence censorship was required based on standards of truth determined by the State. This is a clear case of art being yoked to "intellectual and moralistic values," which Read deplores. Read would feel that the child has a better aesthetic judgment than the State, and that only aesthetic judgments count, since the quality of art as art guarantees its cognitive value. His version has more of Rousseau in it: the teacher is there to protect the child's sensibility from the decadence of the adult world rather than to enforce the rule of the State.

Read's constant claim that he is restating Plato's case for the arts in education (a curious example of Read's tendency to appeal to authority) may give the impression of being anti-intellectual because it leads one to think that his argument is simply Plato's argument without the insistence on geometry and dialectic. One may wonder: Plato regarded the latter study of reflective and discursive materials as of the greatest importance; why doesn't Read? It must be that he does not value them. Now it may in fact be true that Read undervalues these studies for educational purposes; certainly he doesn't talk much about them. But his theory of art does not oblige him to undervalue them, nor is there any reason why he should talk much about them. For his argument is not simply Plato's argument minus censorship, geometry, and dialectic; it is something different. Read's appeal to Plato is especially unfortunate because it occurs mostly in his writings about education rather than in those about art. It is curious that the former give a much stronger anti-intellectual impression than do the latter; the most general reason perhaps is that in the latter he is often more concerned with the question of what art is, and less concerned to persuade one of what ought to be and the necessity for change. Compare *Education for Peace*, for instance, with *Icon and Idea*. It seems to me that the latter has more of Read's real argument concerning the relevance of art to education than has the former.

Another example of a misleading emphasis occurs when Read is talking about crafts and games in school. Read, as I understand him, would want to maintain the Crocean opposition between art and craft, the latter being the process of calculating means to achieve an end that is clearly foreseen. Art is the opposite of craft in this sense, for its end product, by Read's definition, is not foreseen but discovered. But

this opposition has very little to do with the distinction between the fine and the useful arts, with which it is sometimes confused. Read heartily dislikes this distinction, and any formulation that seems to imply that the activity of art must be limited to a few traditional media. As we have seen, he thinks this is a great mistake. In particular, he thinks that simple handicrafts (and games) are excellent educational devices. Unfortunately, he does not always make clear his reason for thinking that they are educational: that they provide the occasions for the activities of art. Sometimes, for instance, he appears to suggest that their value lies in the opportunity to develop skill, and to say that skill as such should be an aim of education. This easily gives an impression of anti-intellectualism. A fair example comes from *The Grass Roots of Art*:

> A child cannot use a pencil or a pen, a brush or a potter's wheel, without discovering that, in order to be expressive, hand and eye must work in an instinctive unison. Art in this way produces an integration of the senses which we call *skill,* and which is one of the most fundamental purposes of any system of education. (*The Grass Roots of Art,* p. 110, Read's emphasis)

It is true that in this case Read goes on to say that the deeper discipline in education is the discipline of form, meaning, one supposes, the intuitive aspects of art. But what is meant by "skill" here seems to be no more than the coordination of the senses, something which may be wholly a matter of the nervous system and unrelated to awareness. (It might also be remarked that it is doubly unfortunate to call this an "integration" of the senses, because the "integration" of the personality is elsewhere in Read's writing an alternative, psychoanalytically oriented, formula for the "innocent eye," the state of the successful artist.) While this kind of skill is developed by practice and repetition and the most skillful acts are those whose elements are most unconsciously performed, the activity of art is essentially nonrepetitive and productive of awareness. Art, therefore, is not the same as skill, though some kinds of art require great skill. Elsewhere, Read suggests that the technical skills required of children in their own art develop "naturally," and need not be a matter of special concern to the teacher (*E.T.A.,* p. 211). It is therefore confusing, at the least, for Read to call the production of skill, "one of the most fundamental purposes of any system of education;" what he means is that skill may only be instrumental to one of the most fundamental purposes of education.

A third kind of passage, perhaps the most difficult to account for as not anti-intellectual, occurs in some of Read's discussions of psychoanalysis and art. He is well-known for his championship of psychoanalytic, and especially Jungian, interpretations of art. In general this fits well with the more general theory outlined in Part III of this paper. Nevertheless, writers in this tradition have usually found it necessary to distinguish between two senses in which a man may be said to express his emotions. One involves their clarification and increased awareness of what they are directed towards, which I have already discussed. In another sense, it may be said that we express our emotions in compulsive behavior, as in neurotic action or in the "psychopathology of everyday life." For example, a student may lose his pen before an exam. In this sense, one expresses one's emotions only by manifesting them, by displaying their effects; in the same sense, a skid mark may be said to express the speed and direction of the car that made it. A student who loses his pen does not

thereby come to a greater understanding of himself, unless he reflects afterwards on his actions, in which case his reflection is a distinct activity. Similarly, dreams bring no illumination with them, and dreaming can be distinguished from observing, remembering, and interpreting the dream.

Read does not make these distinctions, preferring to take the differences only as matters of degree. This is a consequence of his rejection of the fundamental distinction on which these rest, the distinction between things mental and nonmental. He does not discuss this rejection at any length (but he does not claim to be a metaphysician), preferring instead to take it for granted as, for example:

> The original property in matter and energy which organizes the universe in space and time, and which even purely mechanistic science must posit, extends to those forms of energy which we call psychic. Not only are the cosmic and biological processes continuous and co-extensive; the mental processes in man are also part of the same dynamic unity.
> (*E.T.A.*, p. 191)

Consequently, Read can talk of wholly unconscious processes as being a part of both art and education. Thus in the sixth chapter of *E.T.A.* he suggests that the most basic psychological process in education is the maturing of the Jungian archetypes in the unconscious mind. His example is the mandala form, exhibited in the "mind-pictures" of some English school-girls, the products of day-dreaming. Those pictures which are most organized and come from the deepest level of the unconscious are the best evidence (being in part cause) of personal "integration."

It would seem that the notion of a formative process not attended by consciousness would be self-contradictory, according to my interpretation of Read's notion of form. If there are unconscious processes, according to Read, then they cannot, by definition, be counted as cases of art. Yet this seems to be what Read intends:

> psychic equilibrium . . . is only possible when this integration of formal elements below the level of consciousness is allowed or encouraged to take place, which it notably does in all forms of imaginative activity—day-dreaming, spontaneous elaboration of fantasy, creative expression in colour, line, sounds and words. (*E.T.A.*, p. 191, the whole italicized.)

Apparently, therefore, the day-dreaming (which produced the "mind-pictures") was "below the level of consciousness," and would have to be counted as a case of expression only in the second sense discussed above. If this is so, it could not be counted as art on Read's usual definition. Therefore, if it is put forth as a good example of what he sees education to be (as it is), one may conclude, after all, that Read's conception of education is anti-intellectual. Insistence on the continuity of biological and mental processes does not seem enough to save the case. Yet even this interpretation is not accurate, since on the very next page we find the emphasis on observation (which implies consciousness) reinserted. The same method of education is described, confusingly, through a quotation from Jung, as "watching objectively the development of any fragment of fantasy."

The same ambiguity is to be found in Read's discussions of the value of the "eidetic image" (chapter 3 of *E.T.A.*, chapter 1 of *Icon and Idea.*) According to Read, who claims to be following the work of Jaensch, the eidetic image is a distinct kind and differs from the normal memory image in that it is clearer, more detailed, and less subject to fading. It is like an after-image, which is a purely physiological

consequence of sensation, but it is not dependent on the recency of sensation. Such images are said to be very common among children, but to fade away at adolescence in the average person; Read also suggests that paleolithic art is the result of such images. More importantly, he suggests that they are important in education and should be encouraged because they are a natural form of the activity of art.

The question that one wants to ask because it remains unanswered is whether the eidetic image is a purely physiological affair, as the after-image is. Of course, one can become conscious of it as one can of an after-image; but is consciousness linked to the eidetic image as it is to art, i.e., as its product? Is the eidetic image more like a dream or the observation of a dream? Read's account undoubtedly suggests the former, and one must conclude that its occurrence is suggestive neither of art nor of education. In failing to make this distinction and indeed in refusing to accept it, Read once more invites the charge we are concerned with. In these latter instances, I do not think he can be wholly acquitted.

What I have been discussing in this section of my paper are exceptions or apparent exceptions to what Read more usually says. In this short space I cannot give a full account of them or suggest Read's own probable arguments for them. However, it does seem that there are some few cases that are not compatible with what has been said in section III. The purpose of identifying them as exceptions is that they should not mislead the reader as to the tenor of the bulk of Read's work.

V

Having considered some exceptions, I want, in conclusion, to return to what I have claimed to be the main theme in Read's aesthetics.

There are, in general, two reasons why he champions art as a necessary part of education. The first is that art is itself intrinsically valuable, the second that the reflective or discursive intellect in some sense depends upon it. His theory of art, as I have interpreted it, puts this first reason in a peculiarly acceptable light. For the claim of art to a value of its own is not being maintained against the similar claims of the cognitive and intellectual; it is not that there is something in addition to or instead of the cognitive with which the school should be concerned. Rather, art is valuable because it is a part of the life of the intellect. The schools are therefore amiss if they do not foster it.

The same thing is true of the second reason. Whatever the sense in which the discursive is dependent upon the nondiscursive (and this is not the place to discuss so difficult a topic), it is not a sense which makes art equivalent to therapy or the search for "mental health." It is because they are both forms of cognition, and art is the more fundamental. This may be construed as saying no more than that learning without understanding is undesirable, and that understanding requires insight, and insight is art (i.e. formulation). This is a possible interpretation though not the only one. Such an interpretation would not be very original, not perhaps even very debatable; but it can hardly be called anti-intellectual. Nor is it a pointless insistence: for in practice it is a truth that is frequently ignored. Read's work, on this interpretation would be a protest, familiar enough in the history of education, against the perennial tendency of the teacher to insist over much on the form of

learning and not enough on insight. The protest is made, it is important to stress, not because the accepted forms of knowledge are thought to be less important, but so that they will be better understood. According to Read, children will be better and not worse scientists if they are educated as he desires, because the progress of science depends upon the ability to look freshly at the world (*E.T.A.*, pp. 11, 215, 245).

It is true that the process of acquiring systematic knowledge, even with insight, does tend to destroy the flexible, tentative spirit which characterizes both art and science, and that the verification of knowledge is in effect the stamping in of successful forms. It is well known that learning creates pedants, and Read is above all an anti-pedant, bolstering his attack with a theory. But the difficulties of combining learning with ability, systematic knowledge with the innocent eye, are due to human limitations and poor teaching methodologies. These are practical problems not theoretical incompatibilities. Therefore, Read does not need to throw out discursive knowledge along with pedantry in order to make room for insight; and, though he may sometimes give this impression, I do not think this is his intention.

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REFERENCES

1 There may be some terminological confusion occasioned by varying uses of "intellect" and "intellectual." In what follows, I (following Read) distinguish between two moments in mental life, between the discursive and the nondiscursive, the reflective and the intuitive. If one takes "intellect" to be the equivalent of "mind," then one will suppose that both moments are equally "intellectual." This is the usage I adopt, supposing that "anti-intellectual" means "hostile to intelligent or meaningful activity." My reason for doing so is that it is only in this sense that the charge is necessarily damaging to an educational theorist. This is also the usage of Collingwood and Langer. If one wished to restrict "intellect" to the discursive level of mind, however, this would not be unusual. Read himself is inconsistent on the point, frequently using "intellectual," (as in my first quotation), along with "moralistic," "logical," "abstract," "grammatical," and others, to indicate only the discursive level. Hence, when he expresses a dislike of the "intellectual," this is not in itself sufficient to show that he is "anti-intellectual."

2 *Henry Moore: Sculpture and Drawings,* 3rd edition, London: Lund, Humphries and Co., 1949.

3 The reference is to Morris Weitz, "The Role of Theory in Aesthetics," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism,* XV, September, 1956, 27-35; and W. E. Kennick, "Does Traditional Aesthetics Rest on a Mistake?" *Mind,* LXII, 1958, 317-334, reprinted in C. Barrett ed., *Collected Papers on Aesthetics,* New York: Barnes and Noble, 1966.

4 3rd edition: London: Faber and Faber, 1958. Hereinafter referred to as ETA.

5 See *Icon and Idea,* Harvard University Press, 1955, especially chapter one.

6 Rudolph Arnheim's *Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye,* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1944, is a well-known attempt to apply this kind of psychological finding to the visual arts.

7 *Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General Linguistic,* trans. Ainslie, revised ed., New York: Noonday Press, 1955, pp. 2-3.