PICTURING

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WHEN we move from darkness into the light, it becomes possible for us to let many things appear which could not appear in the dark. The presence of light lets us see things like trees and tables, which we can touch but not see when there is no light, and it lets us see things like colors and pictures, which cannot be present at all while we remain in darkness. We are all familiar with light as that which lets such things appear to us. However, there is something besides light, something we can call, metaphorically, another kind of illumination, that is also at work when things appear to us; this is the achievement of letting things appear. It comes about in us, and if it did not take place, going from darkness into the light would not do us much good. It is only because we are engaged in the achievement of letting things appear that we normally prefer light to darkness, and there are also times when we achieve manifestation better in darkness than in the light.

The achievement of letting things appear takes place in different ways. It occurs as perceiving and as picturing, as remembering and as imagining, as naming and as articulating, as registering what is before us and as reporting what is absent. These are all forms of the "other illumination" which makes being in the light desirable for us. They are achievements or activities, what Aristotle called *energeia*. They are not simply organic tensions or processes that occur in us, like pains, the circulation of the blood, or electrical discharges in the nervous system. They are disclosures; they let things appear. Things could not appear unless we or someone like us permitted them to appear by serving as the datives of their manifestation; we serve in this capacity by our various activities of disclosure.

The various ways of allowing things to appear depend on one
another. Things could not be named or articulated if they could not be pictured or recollected; things could not be pictured or recollected unless they could be named, registered, and reported. The various forms of manifestation are implicated with one another, and all contribute to the achievement of letting things appear. The activity of manifestation occurs inexorably within us—we do not seek it out, and only because it takes place in us can we seek anything out—and it establishes in us the possibility of being human.

We will explore the activity of letting things appear by exploring one of its forms, the activity of picturing. We will examine what it is for us to take something as a picture and what it is for something to be a picture. Inevitably, we will also examine what it is for us to take something as pictured and what it is for something to be pictured. Although the word “picture” usually refers to visual representations, we intend to speak about picturing in a wider sense, and will use the term, with appropriate qualifications, to cover auditory images like echoes or vocal imitations, as well as lively representations like mimicry and plays. The word “image” might have been a better term than “picture” to name what we wish to discuss, but “image” has acquired an intrusive flavor of the internal and the imaginary. It has lost the bodilessness and the publicness in the meaning of the Greek word eikon; the phrase “graven images” harks back to an earlier usage of the English noun. Instead of running the risk that this spiritualized meaning of “image” might subvert what we wish to say, we will use the more solid term “picture” to name the kind of appearance we intend to describe.

When pictures were extremely rare, there would have been something venerable in the captured, imaged presence of almost any object. But we now live amid a proliferation of pictures of all sorts, in newspapers and magazines, books, recordings, movies and photographs, on television and on the radio. We are often fascinated by what is presented in particular images, but picturing as such has become banal and we take it for granted. Because pictures are no longer extraordinary, it has become more necessary to think about depiction itself in order to obtain some distance toward the images that surround us, to keep ourselves from getting so lost in what is pictured that we forget that there is something at work in us that allows pictures to come to be.

Being a picture cannot be explained by similarity alone. Although John resembles his brother Paul, and although my car is similar to yours, neither John nor my car are pictures, respectively, of Paul and of your car. There can be similarity without picturing. Further, there can also be picturing without the normal similarity of one thing to another. There are pictures that barely resemble what they picture; some sketches or statues, for example, may be so contrived that we would never say that this object resembles the thing it represents unless we knew that the object is to be taken as a picture. Its being taken as a picture allows us to find a similarity that we would not otherwise have seen. Further, similarity is reciprocal but picturing is not; if my car is similar to yours, yours is also similar to mine, but if this object is a picture of Janet, Janet is not a picture of this object; she would be a picture of this object if picturing were established only by being similar. Finally, in similarity we have two distinct individuales that resemble each other, while in picturing we have the same individual presented in two different ways; I see Eisenhower when I see his picture, I do not see someone or something that looks like Eisenhower. The last reason is an explanation for the first three: it is because picturing is a different kind of presentation than similarity that similarity is insufficient to account for picturing, that pictures can be in many ways dissimilar to what they portray, and that similarity is reciprocal while picturing is not.

How does picturing come about? It occurs when something is taken as a picture of something else; there must be an object taken as the picture, there must be something appreciated as pictured, and there must be somebody who takes the object as a picture. Picturing occurs at the intersection of these three elements. The one who takes the object as a picture brings about the achievement of picturing, but it is the object that actually becomes the picture; being a picture does not occur in the one who takes the object as a picture, it occurs in the picture itself. It takes place in the thing taken as a picture; that is “where” picturing happens. Moreover, the activity of being a picture is not the same as the activity of
taking something as a picture, even though both achievements must occur together. What I do when I take this piece of variously colored paper as a picture is not the activity of being a picture, even though nothing could be a picture unless I or someone like me took it as such.

Some pictures come about without being constructed by anyone: reflections on water or on a smooth and shiny surface, and even echoes, if we may speak of auditory pictures, occur and are taken as images even though they are not fabricated. Many other pictures, however, are made by someone, by a painter, sculptor, designer, photographer, mimic, author, or someone drawing a sketch. The maker of a picture is a fourth to the three elements introduced earlier (the picture, the pictured, and the one who takes something as a picture). The maker of a picture is philosophically the least important of the four, even though he is the most important in regard to the industry of making pictures available. He is of least importance philosophically because he carries out his work within the possibilities established by the one who can see objects as pictures; he makes pictures only because things are already taken as pictures; picturing is a condition for his activity as a painter or designer. The painter may make a picture, but what makes his product into a picture is the fact that someone takes it as such. We have to look beyond the painter to understand pictures philosophically.

We must acknowledge, however, that the activity of constructing pictures occurs, in an extremely attenuated degree, even in the case of reflections and echoes, because someone has to put us or the object in the correct position to let the image take place. We who see the image may also be the ones who take the position, but our activity of taking the colored shapes as an image must be distinguished from our activity of getting into the right position to do so. (It may be objected that taking the right position to see the reflection is only a movement in space, but what, after all, is making a picture beyond arranging colors and shapes in space?) The maker of a picture is at work, therefore, in all cases of picturing, even those that involve images that are not, strictly, fabricated by anyone.

Still another case of picturing is found in what we call imagination or phantasy. This is the most difficult to analyze philosophically, because in contrast to material pictures and reflections on surfaces, it is hard to say whether anything is being “taken as” a picture in imagination; there is clearly no painted canvas or cut stone, there is no pattern of shapes on a surface, and yet in some sense we do
paper and this colored paper as a picture. We take it for granted that this is a picture and think only about what it depicts, its composition, the fidelity of its depiction, or its condition as a product; we do not ask what grants it its being as a picture. To ask what lets it be a picture at all, and what it is for it to be a picture, is to raise a philosophical question. And of all the achievements and relationships involved in picturing, only this one—the one which is philosophically the most important—does not have a name in the ordinary English use of the word “picture.”

“Where” does picturing occur? In the object taken as a picture of something. “When” does it occur? It does not take any extent of time for something to become taken as a picture; an object does not become a picture gradually, but changes suddenly from being only a thing to being a picture. Even if we have only a fragment of the picture, like a piece of an ancient mosaic portrait, the part is taken to be part of a picture. If we gradually add other pieces to the fragment we already have, or if a painter adds new parts to the portrait he is painting, the new parts are parts of the picture as soon as they are introduced. The achievement of taking this emergent whole as a picture is not itself emergent as the pieces fall into place; the enactment of a picture is a sudden, not a gradual activity, and it lasts once it occurs. Similarly, it takes time for our eyes to range over the picture and to move from one part to another, but all this occurs within the object already established as a picture. The transition from being a thing to being a picture does not take time, but a picture lasts as a picture once it is established as such, and changes can occur within it as a picture.

In some cases the depiction itself can be a process; if a mimic depicts Winston Churchill or W. C. Fields, he does so by making gestures, saying special things, speaking in a certain way, and changing his facial expression. All this takes time, but the time is entirely within the setting established by the man’s being taken as a mimic, and the transition from being taken as a man to being taken as a mimic does not take time; it happens all at once. The gestures and words that follow one another are like the further parts of the painting that the artist adds to what he has done, except that the earlier parts of the mimic’s depiction depart when the new ones arrive, whereas the painter’s earlier sections remain as the new ones are added.

Once we have acquired the ability of taking things as pictures, we can exercise it at any time with no effort; it is no less easy to do when we are tired than when we are rested, no harder when we are young than when we are old. It is a way of minding things, and not a way of getting something done. The ease, suddenness, and ubiquity of taking things as pictures make us esteem this achievement, as well as the other works of the mind, as more subtle than the things done by the body.

Although taking things as pictures is ubiquitous in the sense that there is no place and no time in which we could not take something as a picture, it is not ubiquitous in the sense that we can take anything at all as a picture. I cannot take my desk, or this wall, or this tree, or this cat, as pictures. I can exercise my picturing capacity wherever and whenever I wish, but I cannot exercise it upon anything I wish. If something is to be capable of being taken as a picture, either it must have been constructed as an image by someone (by a painter or by someone imitating the sound of something else); or it must contain a natural reflection of what is depicted (mirrored images and echoes); or it must be a combination of reflection and construction: a reflection made permanent and detached from the object that generates it (photographs and recordings). The two active elements I must acknowledge in these three possibilities are the person who constructs a picture and the object that generates a reflection of itself. I need their cooperation to carry out my achievement of taking something as a picture; without the intervention of at least one of these two, I cannot exercise this ability, because I would have nothing before me subject to being taken as a picture. However, although I need the cooperation of such alien centers of force, what I achieve when I take something as a picture is done by me and not by them. By my activity I provide the setting for the construction or reflection of images.

II

Reflections and Fabricated Pictures

Pictures which are constructed by someone can be enjoyed in the complete absence of the object they depict. A painting or an imitation of someone’s voice can be enjoyed when the object painted or the person imitated are very far away, when they no longer exist at all, and even if they never existed. Reflections, whether
visual images or echoes, are perceived in much closer proximity to what is reflected in them. It is in fact rather common to perceive the original and the image together: the bridge and its reflection in the water, the shout and its echo. There is some differentiation between the original and the reflection, because we have to change the focus of our attention as we look first at the bridge and marginally see the image, then focus on the image and marginally see the bridge; and as we hear the shout from this direction and the echo from that, and hear the shout first and then the echo as the shout recedes from the center of our temporally stretched hearing. This divergence of image from original in the case of reflections does not, however, disrupt the unity of our perception; I do not have two perceptions, one of the original and one of the reflection, but a single “paired” perception of the original with its reflection, or the image with its original.

Natural reflections differ in three ways from pictures constructed by someone. (1) As we have just noted, a greater degree of separation is possible in the case of constructed pictures. True, we can sometimes have reflections when we cannot see the original at all (a mirror allows us to see around a corner), and sometimes we can have a constructed picture in the same perceptual field in which we have the thing depicted. However, since a constructed picture is a product, it can be possessed in the sheer absence of what it depicts, while the reflection needs the original nearby in order to be continuously generated by it. Proximity is normal in the case of reflected images, and a “paired” perception of the original-with-reflection is almost always possible.

(2) To achieve the kind of picturing that occurs in natural, proximate reflections is a condition for achieving the picturing in constructed images. This relationship is analogous to how we come to take things as capable of being perceived by other people. Even if we are all alone, we experience things—trees and rivers—as capable of being perceived by others; however, this sense in things is established for us by the achievement of experiencing things in the actual company of other people, who see the same objects we see, but see them from other angles. We appreciate the thing as also perceived by others who are there with us. This proximate shared perception is a condition for our solitary perception of the tree and the river as still capable of being perceived from another viewpoint by someone else while we perceive it from the spot that is the “here” for us. Just as paired perception establishes a sense of other minds, a sense that belongs to objects even when no one else is actually with us, so the kind of pairing that occurs in proximate imaging, and especially in natural reflections, establishes the sense of original-and-picture that works even when we have only the picture and no possibility of bringing the original to it. Proximate natural reflections, mirror images and echoes, involve us in a more primitive activity of taking something as a picture than the activity we are engaged in when we deal with pictures that are constructed by someone.

(3) Because a reflection is generated by its original, we can find out what is happening in the original by watching the reflection. The reflection goes on while the original goes on; a reflection is a process continuously sustained by the going-on in the original. A constructed picture, however, catches and maintains (or repeats) only one profile of the original. It may catch something very revealing of the original, but it does not report what is going on in the original while we see the picture. The elimination of a continuous report is related to the separability of the constructed picture from what it depicts.

A live television or radio program works like a reflection, for despite the complexity of the intervening apparatus, the images have ultimately to be given off by the original being imaged. The technical apparatus is not different in principle from the light rays between the bridge and its reflection in the water. The technology allows the

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1 On “pairing” as a special kind of perception and on its role in our awareness of other minds, see Edmund Husserl, Cartesian Meditations, (trans.) Dorion Cairns (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1960), §51.

2 On mirrored reflections and pictures, see Hans-Georg Gadamer, Wahrheit und Methode, Second Edition (Tübingen: Mohr, 1965), pp. 131–134. Jacques Lacan has emphasized the importance of mirrored reflections of ourselves in the establishment of our own body image and in the subsequent development of the self and its ego functions. Seeing one’s body reflected as a whole and recognizing it as one’s self, seeing a view of a living body and appreciating it as the same as the mass of mobility and affection one is beginning to pattern, experiencing the same motions from the inside and at a distance, is a consolidation that precedes and permits further emotional and cognitive syntheses; the stade du miroir occurs as early as the sixth month of life, and brings about a sense of the self which is a condition for such experiences as the Oedipal identifications and conflicts. See “Le stade du miroir comme formateur de la fonction du Je,” in Écrits (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1966), pp. 99–100.
reflection to be presented very far away from the original, but it does not destroy the contemporaneity of the two, and it still allows us to see what is going on in the original while we watch the image. However, a film or a recording is different: a temporal disruption is added to the spatial separation, and we lose the direct "informational" element. If I watch a film of what somebody did yesterday, I do not learn from it what he is doing now. Technological development in communication has expanded the ways in which reflections can be transmitted, and has further diversified the means by which reflections can be made available for repeated viewings and hearings. This development has led some people to prefer the preserved image to the imaged event; at ceremonies like important speeches or weddings, for example, which can be perceived only once, some members of the party put all their attention into taking pictures or recording what is said, and do not "see and hear" what is going on (they often make it difficult for others to see and hear as well). Then they have a photograph of the event instead of a memory of it, and look at the picture instead of having seen the thing. The power to perceive is given over to a machine, which is asked to "make" the perceptions for us, and to allow us to have them again and again. None of this technological development could have happened, however, if we were not the kind of beings that can take things as pictures, and if being did not allow things to be pictured as well as perceived.

Picturing

and, in hearing, the sound comes from this direction and the echo from another; but tasting and smelling are concentrated and there is hardly any spatial differentiation within their actual field. There is no space to allow the divergence between an original and its image, and without this rudimentary form of reflected imaging, there cannot be the more evolved form of constructed pictures. Tasting and smelling do not have the latitude to permit picturing. The sense of touch is somewhere between vision and hearing on one hand and smell and taste on the other. There is a strong impact in touch, but there is some spatial differentiation within the tactile field: I can touch an object with my right hand while I touch what is supposed to be its image with the left. I can, for example, take a piece of shaped stone as the tactile picture of someone's face. However, we rarely identify individual things with the sense of touch, and in touch the impression on our sensibility is very strong, so it is most unusual for pictures to occur to this sense.

III

Theater and Imagination

Gertrude Stein makes the following distinction between an exciting scene we are involved in and an exciting scene we see in the theater, where it is depicted and not "really" lived through:

If you are taking part in an actual violent scene, and you talk and they or he or she talk and it goes on and it gets more exciting and finally then it happens, whatever it is that does happen then when it happens then at the moment of happening is it a relief from the excitement or is it a completion of the excitement. In the real thing it is a completion of the excitement, in the theater it is a relief from the excitement, and in that difference the difference between completion and relief is the difference between emotion concerning a thing seen on the stage and the emotion concerning a real presentation that is really something happening.

A real scene leads up to completion and climax, while a depicted scene leads up to relief. The relief is not caused by our reassuring knowledge that the actors do not truly hate one another, that Sir Ralph Richardson is not angry with Marlon Brando, that there is

no real threat or danger. There is relief instead of climax because we are watching an angry man depicted, not an angry man. We have a kind of distance to the angry man depicted which is different from the kind of distance we might have even if we were totally uninvolved and unthreatened while we watched a real angry man. It is also different from the distance we would have if we watched someone only pretend to be angry and knew he was pretending; pretension is a maneuver in a real scene, it is not a depiction. The depiction allows us to be involved with the angry man, but with him as represented, and this insertion of the difference between the picture and the depicted permits us to experience the angry man in the special kind of tranquillity which Gertrude Stein calls relief and Aristotle calls catharsis. The distance in depiction is established by a new way of taking the angry man (as depicted), as well as by a new way of taking the human being who is carrying on before us (as depicting). It is not established by a further feature, like harmlessness, that characterizes the anger we see. Stein goes on to say that our own actual experiences gradually take on the tone of relief rather than climax as we go over them in memory:

As you go over the detail that leads to culmination of any scene in real life, you find that each time you cannot get completion, but you can get relief and so already your memory of any exciting scene in which you have taken part turns it into the thing seen or heard not the thing felt. You have as I say as the result relief rather than culmination. Relief from excitement, rather than the climax of excitement.

Again, this sense of relief comes not from the comforting knowledge that the ordeal is over—it is not established by the temporal difference as such—but from having the same ordeal in a new way of presentation. The temporal difference is only a condition for the new way of taking what we have experienced.

The terms “climax” and “relief” introduce an aspect of picturing that we have neglected in our analysis so far. We have described picturing as if it were free of concern. There are times when pictures are merely objects of idle curiosity for us, and times when they are taken as aesthetic objects, in which our interest in the compositional relations of shape and color predominate in importance over the interest we have in what is depicted; but it is more normal for pictures to provoke the affective and personal response that we make to the bodily presence of what is depicted. It is good and it is important for us to have things present in pictures. If the object depicted is a gratifying object, its pictorial presence calls for the affective response the object itself would summon: therefore we keep pictures of absent persons and places that we love or admire. The picture sustains an attitude toward the object, and it does so more effectively than, say, the name of the person or place would be capable of doing. It is only because we are the kind of being that can enjoy things in their presence and also intend them in their absence—because we appreciate presences and absences as well as things—that we can take something as a picture of what is absent. Having the object only in a picture for a period of time may also enhance the bodily presence of the object when it is regained. The distance we have acquired in the meantime, while we had the thing only as a picture, makes the contrasting direct presence of the object more vivid. And no matter how articulated and intellectual our response to desirable things may become, they still are desirable things and it is good for us to possess them; when they themselves cannot be possessed, there is still the presence in pictures to serve, for the time being, in their place. If we have to do with a distressing object, the pictorial presence serves especially to bring the thing into relief. Picturing helps us rehearse the scene and to acquire more tranquillity toward it. Simply naming the object and working it out in words—if this, per impossibile, were possible without some element of picturing, remembering, and imagination—would not master the thing. But again, the pictorial distance does not make the bad object any less bad. The pleasure or the pain the object itself would give is reflected in the pictorial availability of good and bad things.

A special analysis of picturing is possible in the case of mimicry and acting, and it will help us understand the peculiarities of imagination in contrast to picturing. In mimicry and in acting, a human being serves as the vehicle which is taken as an image: the spectators take his actions as depictions, and he also takes himself as depicting. No matter how profoundly he can become lost in his role, the actor shares with the spectators the interpretation of what he is doing as a portrayal, not as a solid, real action. But the actor needs the support of spectators if he is to take himself as acting. He can take himself as depicting someone else only if he also appreciates

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4 Ibid., p. 98.
himself as being taken in this role by an audience. If he tries to continue “acting” while he is alone, a change in the way he takes himself occurs: either (a) he slips into a simple practice of the mechanics of his performance (he says the words and makes the gestures something like an athlete practicing strokes; they are actions of his own, not those of, say, Richard III); or (b) he takes himself as still portraying Richard III, but he does so by remembering or anticipating the audience before whom he performs, and before whom he takes himself to be depicting someone (he could not depict Richard III to himself alone, without this marginal sense of an audience); or (c) he can shift from taking himself as portraying Richard III to beginning to imitate Richard III. That is, he begins to act like a king, and no longer depicts a king. He can begin to behave like a child who is playing at being someone he wishes to become. This activity is more serious than portrayal; we try the character on for size. The solitary thespian who has slipped into being a visionary would know that he is not Richard III or a king, but he would behave as if he were: he would “imagine” himself to be Richard III or a king. Any spectators he might also imagine would not be like the audience he remembers or anticipates when he still takes himself as portraying Richard III, for such an audience would be anticipated or remembered as taking him to depict Richard III; the spectators in our present case would be imagined as seeing him being a king, not as depicting a king. They are not imagined as seeing him imagining himself to be a king; they are imagined as involved in the scene he imagines. There is a difference between the formal structures of presencing in depiction and imagination.

Children often try on such characters in their overt behavior, while adults do it less in external actions but often “in imagination.” Whether young or old, we modulate ourselves into new ways of behaving by imagining ourselves to be different from the way we are. This imitation of a new style, this rehearsal of what it would be like, makes it possible for us to become different; without it we would be locked into one pattern of behavior. Except in the most urgent circumstances, we do not decide upon a change in our way of life without imagining ourselves into it first and trying to “figure out” what we are going to do. Many of the actions we essay never become realized, but there are some that become more and more plausible as they are imaginatively repeated, and we gradually find ourselves, for better or for worse, living the way we once imagined ourselves to be. A child may lose itself rather completely in the imaginative role it is playing because its sense of its self is not yet firmly established. An adult has a more solid sense of himself and is more clearly aware that he is imagining. He has a more distinct awareness that he is there imagining and that he is also there imagined, as someone behaving, say, as an airplane pilot or as the mayor: and yet both of these agents, the imager and the imagined, are realized to be one and the same. In imagination there is a displacement, what has been called a Versetzung, of the self. There are not two selves, but one self duplicated. What we generally call imagination, the activity we carry on while we daydream, is an internalized version of the imitative, imaginative overt behavior in which, for example, an actor begins to take on the character of a king. It is not a case of his depicting himself as a king, because in depiction we do not imagine “ourselves” being a king. We merely take ourselves as a picture of the king.

Imagination, therefore, must be distinguished from mimicry and portrayal. But imagination is more commonly confused with another form of picturing. It is often thought that in imagination we internally do something like what we do when we take a colored canvas as a picture. What distinguishes imagination, according to this view, is not a displacement of the self, but a phantasm which we see with the mind’s eye and take as a picture of something absent. Taking something as a picture is used as a model to clarify what happens when we imagine, and in the place of the colored canvas the strange entity called the phantasm is postulated.

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5 In serious forms of mental illness the sense of one’s self as imitator can be lost: “The boundaries between self and object become undifferentiated and the patients seem to believe that if they do what the doctor does they thereby become the doctor.” Elizabeth R. Zetelze and W. W. Meissner, Basic Concepts of Psychoanalytic Psychiatry (New York: Basic Books, 1975), p. 299. 6 In dreams the imagining self is almost entirely put to sleep. See Theodor Conrad, Zur Wesenlehre des psychischen Lebens und Eriebene, Phanomenologische 27 (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1968), pp. 1–41. On the imagination of future possibilities of action, see pp. 45–49. Conrad observes that sometimes we remain firmly in control as we plan our future actions by going through them deliberately in imagination; at other times we relax our control and slip into passive reverie. In the first case the imagining self remains prominent, in the second case the imagined self predominates. The concept of the displacement of the self is developed by Husserl and elaborated along many different directions in his analysis of inner time-consciousness.
This explanation fails to take into account the displacement of the self into imager and imagined. When we take something as a picture, we do not distinguish ourselves into two selves (for example, into the perceiver and the one who pictures); we remain undifferentiated, and the duplication takes place in the object, which is not just an object but also a picture. If we try to use picturing as a model to explain imagination, we are forced to overlook the duplication of the self that occurs in imagining. Furthermore, because this explanation does not recognize the self as both imagining and imagined, it tends to neglect the lively activity of the imagined self. It makes imagination too passive and contemplative, and does not do justice to the self behaving in imagination; taking revenge on someone, being reconciled with someone, playing tennis, giving a speech as mayor of Chicago. In imagining ourselves doing such things, we do not simply watch pictures go by; we are engaged in the action we imagine. Finally, the status of the phantasm—Ryle’s “paperless picture”—is almost impossible to describe. What kind of ersatz picture can it possibly be? It is true that there are image-scrap in imagining, but they are attached to the imagined self as parts of his behavior. I cannot imagine myself playing tennis without some sense of motion in the arms and legs, some sense of a ball coming and being hit back, some sense of the sound made when the racket hits the ball; but all these are part of the sense of myself playing tennis. They are not pictures of someone playing tennis, nor are they pictures of myself playing tennis. They do not carry imagination, imagination carries them. Also, they are evanescent, discontinuous, ragged, and most arbitrary; they can change very much and still allow me to enjoy the same imagination, because the imagination is the experience of myself doing something, not a perception of these image-scrap.

Gilbert Ryle has argued against postulating a phantasm when we describe imagination. Picturing in phantasy is not, he says, like looking at photographs or listening to recordings. Instead,

A person picturing his nursery is, in a certain way, like that person seeing his nursery, but the similarity does not consist in his really looking at a real likeness of his nursery, but in his really seeming to see his nursery itself, when he is not really seeing it. He is not being a spectator of a resemblance of his nursery, but he is resembling a spectator of his nursery.  


A person who is imagining or visually remembering something “seems to see” the object, he “resembles a spectator” of it. Ryle’s description is accurate but incomplete. If someone “seems to see” and “resembles a spectator,” the questions arise, To whom does he seem to see? and To whom does he resemble a spectator? There has to be a dative for this seeming and this resembling. The answer, of course, is that he himself is the one to whom he seems to be seeing, and he himself is the one to whom the resemblance with being a spectator appears; when we are caught up in reverie, and remember or imagine, say, ourselves playing tennis, no one else sees us seeming to play tennis (others only see us with a faraway look in our eyes); we ourselves experience ourselves as seeming to play tennis. This is the displacement, the Versetzung of the self that occurs in imagination. Ryle implies this differentiation of the self but he does not assert it. The differentiation is also implied in his remark about “people fancying themselves witnessing things and events that they are not witnessing,” in his observation that “there is only a child fancying that she sees her doll smiling,” and in his statement that “what I imagine is myself seeing, hearing, doing and noticing things.”

There are two extremes in regard to the imaginative displacement of the self. At one extreme there is the totally undisplaced awareness that we have when we are captivated by what is going on around us. We are taken up by things and events about us and do not withdraw at all from them. At the other extreme there is the deep separation from our surroundings that occurs when we drop into daydreaming or reverie; until we come to again, we are not where we are but, as someone else might say of us, we are “somewhere else.” We are reliving an experience, imagining something, or anticipating an event. From being an undifferentiated self captivated by the succession of things around us, we have become displaced into the imagining and imagined self, and we do lose touch with the people and things that are there around us now. However, between

8 Ibid., pp. 249, 248, 273. In the chapter entitled “Imagination” in The Concept of Mind, Ryle is careful to distinguish looking at pictures from activities like imagining, remembering, theatrical acting, the acting in children’s games, and pretending, but he does not sufficiently notice differences among these latter activities themselves. For example he tends to equate theatrical performances with pretending (p. 255). Also, he talks about a genus of “seeming to perceive” and says that looking at photographs and imagining are two species of it (p. 255). But the “seeming to perceive” in looking at photographs is very different from that in imagination; there is no displacement of the self in looking at pictures.
these two extremes there are innumerable degrees of possible displacements, and they go on all the time as we live through the day.\textsuperscript{10} Even when we are concerned with things, we imaginatively slip into alternative ways of doing whatever we are doing, bits of recollection come and go, the continuity of our involvement is interrupted by displacements weaving in and out. Even our inventiveness in appreciating a real situation depends on the quick and nimble detachments we exercise while we are engaged in it. No perceiving self is, for any length of time, deprived of the plastic contrasts that are provided by the imagining and imagined self. Perception goes on in constant and labile comparison with imagination.

There is also structural variety in the setting we imagine ourselves occupying. If I imagine myself playing tennis, I can imagine myself going through the motion of hitting the ball coming at me, but then I can watch myself “from the outside” as I hit the ball, or as the ball lands near the tape on the other side of the court. I do not have to stay in my own skin when I imagine myself doing something; I can be in the tennis-world imaginatively, then I can see myself doing something in that world. Finally, besides imagining ourselves engaged in an event, and besides imagining ourselves watching ourselves engaged in an action, we can also imagine a scene in which we are not involved at all. We can picture a landscape, a waterfall, people chopping wood, animals running about, all entirely in the third person. We are there as spectators of the scene imagined, but spectators who cannot be perceived or affected by any of the persons and things engaged in the event. This is the kind of impervious viewing which is adopted in the writing and reading of elementary forms of fiction; we survey from the outside a world of which we are not a part.\textsuperscript{11} Even in this case, however, there is a displacement of the self; I who sit in my chair imagine myself seeing the waterfall and the people working near it.

There is almost always some emotional concern in imagination, and its place in the displaced self can vary. I may calmly imagine myself being angry at someone, but often enough the passion in the imagined world straddles the imagining and imagined self and pervades both. Feelings tend to break the network of representations that puts them into relief; they flood through and become real and present. In times of sorrow, for example, the memory of earlier happiness may be bitter because what we enjoyed has been lost, but the memory can also be consoling as it asserts itself more fully, as it insists that the happiness did exist and still survives in remembrance, and as it breaks, for a while at least, the distress we now have.

IV

\textit{Things Are in Pictures}

Because we can distinguish between a picture and the object it depicts, we tend to think of the picture as referring away from itself to its original; if I have a picture of Janet, we tend to suppose the picture points away from itself to Janet when I look at it. But such an understanding would assimilate pictures to ordinary signs, which do indicate something different from themselves. The general’s flag on his limousine indicates that the general is in the car; but the general is in no way in his flag. We move away from the flag when we think of the general. But in picturing we do not move away from the image; what is depicted is presented, as an individual, in the picture itself. The peculiarity of pictorial presence and representation is that pictures do not merely refer to something, but make that something present. I see Janet in her picture, I do not, in the picture, see a sign of Janet. Because this is so we can who, on a wakeful night, entertain themselves with invented landscapes. But I am not there myself as explorer or even as tourist; I am looking at that world from the outside. A further stage is often reached by children, usually in co-operation. They may feign a whole world and people it and remain outside it. But when that stage is reached, something more than mere reverie has come into action; construction, invention, in a word \textit{fiction}, is proceeding.\textsuperscript{15}
speak of an object depicted in a picture even if there is no original actually existing apart from the image. I have a painting of a copper kettle, and it remains a picture of a copper kettle even though there may never have been a real kettle of which this is a copy. I can still refer to “the” kettle depicted in my painting, and when I do so I need not refer to a kettle in some storage cabinet; I mean the one in the painting.

When we recognize a thing in a picture, moreover, we do not merely identify the thing. In pictures we see the thing doing something; there are children playing, a man dying, people crossing a stream; even when something is depicted at rest, there is still life, for the object continues at least to show one of its sides. In a picture there is a presencing or a manifestation of the object, whether in an action or in a quiet disclosure of features. In the picture the object makes an appeal to whatever in us responds to what is present. In some extreme cases, the power of picturing can cause some viewers to lose the sense of the detachment of the image from the original; they may believe that actions performed on the image affect what is imagined in it. An idol becomes the actual presence of a demon or a deity, a voodoo doll can be a way of influencing the human being it depicts. Even persons can become embodiments of spirits; masks and costumes reinforce this confusion of a pictorial with a direct presence, and the identification which occurs in such a ritualistic extreme of imaging must be distinguished from both imagination and theatrical portrayal. The other participants in the

12 Andreas Lommel, Shamanism. The Beginnings of Art, (trans.) Michael Bullock (New York: McGraw Hill, 1967), p. 16: “The hunter saw in the picture of an animal its soul-force, its spiritual being, and believed that by painting pictures he could capture and influence its force. Among the Australian aborigines—who remain today at the level of the early Stone Age hunters—rock-paintings depicting animals and plants are, every year, not repainted but touched up, so that new, powerful souls may go out from them and take on new bodies.” The aboriginal identification of pictures with forces of life betrays, of course, a primitive’s inability to come to terms with differences among kinds of presencing. However, Lommel’s own remarks about things like “ideas, “images of one’s own psyche, “ego,” “world,” etc. (v. g., pp. 11–12) betray another kind of misunderstanding of presences, one that can be called psychological; he takes such presences as entities in the psyche of the person who has them. For further examples of picturing, see Lommel’s other book, Masks Their Meaning and Function, (trans) N Fowler (London: Paul Elek Books, 1972), in which he distinguishes between masks used in embodiment and masks used for disguise.

13 The special character of icons is related to Christian belief in God and in the Incarnation. The Christian God is not a thing in or a part of the world and therefore cannot be imaged in Himself, but in the Incarnation the Second Person of the Trinity has become present as a part of the world, as a human being. An icon of Christ is a depiction of the person of Christ, who is God made man; it is not an attempt to portray the man Christ (therefore physical and psychological characteristics are eschewed), but the man Christ as united to and transformed by the divine nature. Icons of saints, furthermore, are also hieratic and avoid sentiment and corporeal realism; they are meant to portray the man or woman as transformed by grace and as serving as an epiphany of grace to the world. See Leonid Ouspensky and Vladimir Lossky, The Meaning of Icons, (trans) G. E. H. Palmer and E. Kadlubowsky (Boston: Boston Book and Art Shop, 1969), pp. 32–60, 69–70. I am grateful to John Botean and Timothy Quinn for discussions and references concerning iconography.
and combinations of presencings that allow such transformations to take place? How do pictures differ from maps, diagrams, and graphs? How do dreams differ from reverie? How are pictures different from symbols? Many symbols are also pictures, but they symbolize something different from what they picture. A statue of a blindfolded figure holding a balance depicts a woman but symbolizes justice. In such complex cases of imaging, language has to intervene and tropes like metaphor and metonymy enter into the explanation of what is being expressed; but simple picturing is also necessary as an ingredient and as a foil for such images complicated by language. About each of the pictorial structures surveyed in this paragraph, there is something essential to be said, and the network of presences, absences, and displacements appropriate to each case must be philosophically unravelled.

V

The Presencing of Pictures

Picturing must be related to naming in order to be philosophically clarified. An object becomes a nameable object when we appreciate the object as the same in its presence and in its absence. That is, we must become aware of the object as capable of being present and as capable of being absent, and as remaining itself in both conditions. What we name when we name an object is the object as the same in presence and in absence: it is through the play of presence and absence that the object becomes nameable. That is why we can name the object when it is present and also when it is absent.

An implication of this is that when the object is present to us, and is nameable in its presence, we have become aware of its presence. We are not just aware of the Lincoln Memorial, we are aware of it as present. Moreover we are aware of its presence; we are not just aware of an empty, general form of presence, but of the "Lincoln Memorial presence."

What happens in picturing is that the "Lincoln Memorial presence" gets achieved without the Lincoln Memorial, but on the occasion of some vehicle—appropriately colored paper, or the water in the Reflecting Pool—which allows us to enact the presence. Only because we have become the kind of being that uses names, only because we have come to distinguish between a thing and the presence of the thing, can we take something as a picture of that thing: then we achieve the presence of the thing without having the thing itself there.

While we remain in the prephilosophical attitude, and if we have evolved to the point of naming, we have inserted a distinction between a thing and the presence of the thing. This difference is what lets us name the object. But until we do philosophy, this difference does its work anonymously; we are not yet aware that naming is brought about by this distinction. We also do not yet know that this distinction is what permits picturing. Part of the reason why we are not aware of this while we have not yet made the philosophical turn is that we are simply captivated by the good and the bad in things themselves, and hence overlook the presences and absences through which the things, good and bad, are disclosed. Also, we do not talk or think systematically about presences and absences, even though we are familiar with them. We tend to take presences and absences as further features of the thing, and often interpret them as the object's being "here" or "there," or "going on now" or "all finished"; that is, we take them as spatial or temporal attributes. But presence and absence are not features of things, they are modes of presentation and require an appropriate articulation.

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12 On naming, presence and absence, see Robert Sokolowski, Presence and Absence: Minding Words and Things (forthcoming in Spring, 1978, Indiana University Press), Chapter 3; also Plato, Sophist, 234B; "And so we recognize that he who professes to be able by virtue of a single art to make all things will be able by virtue of the painter's art to make imitations which have the same names as the real things... ." (Fowler translation, Loeb Classical Library.)
In philosophical reflection we name presences and absences directly. We do not first introduce them when we begin philosophy, for they were already distinguished from things in prephilosophical experience, where they remained anonymous and overlooked. We name them in philosophy and are able to describe how they move about and are interlaced to permit the various achievements of disclosure that we execute in our prephilosophical experience. In the case of picturing we are able to say that the "Lincoln Memorial presence" is what we peel off the Lincoln Memorial and achieve in pictures of that thing. When we take something as a picture we enact this presence without the Lincoln Memorial: the important element in picturing is that we carry out this activity of executing the presence of a thing without the thing itself. Only because we exercise this activity can we then look for pictorial similarities between the picture and what it depicts.

Moreover, the achievement of taking something as a picture is not merely a psychological exercise. Things do present and absent themselves; things must be distinguished from their presence, and their presence must be distinguished from them (because they remain themselves even when they are absent). The presences of things can be achieved without the things themselves, provided a proper dative of manifestation is available. By letting things be pictured, we allow them to exercise their manifestation. This is not a change in their makeup, for instance in their chemical or biological features, but it is an exercise in their being and truthfulness.

A thing must be distinguished from its being. A thing is what is contrasted against its picture, against its name, against this or that view of it, against its being remembered or imagined or dreamt. The thing is what is "real" against its various ways of being presented. But being includes the modes of presentation; it encompasses presence and absence as well as what is presented and absented. Hence, pictures and names and remembrances and profiles "are," even though they are not things. In the prephilosophical attitude we rush right by pictures and the other kinds of presentation and

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17 See Plato, Sophist, 240B: "Stranger. That which is like, then, you say does not really exist, if you say it is not true Theaetetus. But it does exist, in a way. Str. But not truly, you mean. Th. No, except that it is really a likeness. Str. Then what we call a likeness, though not some thing existed (ouk on are ontoi), is still existent (estin ontoi)?" (Fowler translation modified, from the Loeb Classical Library)
is in the garage and in the photograph, that the garaged car is present and yet not bodily there in the picture, that our minds can move from one to the other in various ways and continue to find the same persisting in both. Furthermore, the picture and the pictured are not just added to each other; they hold together in such a way that they would not be picture and pictured apart from each other. That is, picture-and-pictured, although involving two elements, must be enacted as one. The togetherness of picture and pictured is prior to the work of presence and absence, sameness and otherness, rest and motion. Thinking about pictures leads us, therefore, not only to the question of presencing and being, but also to the most original divergence and togetherness that permit presencing and being to occur.\footnote{On oneness and diversity as more primitive than being as being, see Robert Sokolowski, \textit{Presence and Absence}, Chapter 15, and “Ontological Possibilities in Phenomenology: The Dyad and the One,” \textit{Review of Metaphysics}, XXIX (1976), pp. 691–701, where these phenomenological issues are related to Plato’s doctrine of the One and the Intermediate Dyad. (I am indebted to Thomas Prufer for his help in the present essay on picturing.)}