

## Education and Autonomy

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In his book *The Formation of Reason* (2011), David Bakhurst asserts that the end of education is autonomy, which he explains is the power to determine what to do and think in the light of what there is reason to do and think. I want to ask how we must conceive education, if this is its end. As a change in the broadest sense, education has not only an end, but also a beginning, not only a whither, but also a whence. But not any two things can be joined as the whence and the whither of a change. I want to ask where education begins, if autonomy is where it ends. This requires that I consider an idea that is prominent in Bakhurst's book, which concerns the whence of education: a human being is born an animal and changed into a person, education effecting the change. This idea figures in Bakhurst's argument for the claim that reason is a social and historical reality. The child is born with a first nature, which is biological and individual; it equips the child with animal powers: feeling, desire, perception. Receiving education, the child acquires a second nature, which is social and historical; it equips the child with personal powers: thought and reasoning, intellect and will.

I contend that the idea of a change from animal to person is incoherent. Consequently, education is not the agent of such a change. Reason is not impressed on the child as a second nature; it is always already present as a character of its first nature. Education, instead of being the source of reason in the child, is the source of habits of reason in the child. This not only does not exclude, it entails that reason is actual only as a socio-historical form. For reason is actual only in its habits.

I proceed as follows. I begin by raising suspicion of the idea that education turns an animal into a person by observing that this could not result in autonomy. Then I explain why there is no such change. To this end, I consider what kind of concept the concept of person is: as the concept of plant and animal, it signifies a character of the form of an individual, a character of the principle of its being, being one, being good. It follows that no species and no living being spans the difference of animal from person. Hence we must reconsider the role of reason, the personal power, in education. As reason is not brought about by education, it may be its condition. Indeed, when we consider the consciousness that constitutes education, we realise that in this transaction reason is in fact in both terms: in her who educates as well as in him who is being educated. And this will let us see how autonomy can be the end of education.

The notion of person and reason that emerges may be yet further removed than Bakhurst's is from the social constructivism he criticises so effectively.

I am not sure. In any case, I believe that Bakhurst can, and am hopeful that he does, welcome the conceptual adjustment I am proposing. For, as I end by showing, it does not detract from, but on the contrary enforces the insight that reason is actual in the human being, and can only be actual in the human being, as a social and historical reality.

### **AUTONOMY, WHAT IT IS**

The end of education is autonomy: the power to determine what to think and do in the light of reasons.<sup>1</sup> As is traditional, ‘light’ here signifies knowledge: acting in the light of reasons is not just acting in accord with reasons, but from recognition of those reasons. In Aristotle’s words, it is acting not just *kata logon*, but *meta logou*. We see that the power to act and think in the light of reasons is autonomous, when we reflect on this notion: acting ‘from a reason’, *meta logou*.

A paradigm of thinking something in the light of reasons is judging one thing on the basis of another, or inferring one thing from another. Joining judgements in an inference, I judge one thing because I judge another. But I may judge one thing because I judge another without judging the one on the basis of the other. I do the latter only if I recognise the premises as providing sufficient grounds for the conclusion. Moreover, this recognition cannot be a separate act from the judgement that is the conclusion. If it were, there would need to be a further act that conjoins the conclusion with this recognition, and so on *ad infinitum*. Hence, the conclusion of an inference is a consciousness of itself as resting on the premises, and its resting on the premises is nothing other than this consciousness. We can generalise this: a reason in the light of which one thinks or acts is a cause of thought or action in the manner of being comprehended to be its cause in that very thought or action. Thought or action in the light of reasons has a cause in virtue of, and only in virtue of, its conceiving that cause as its cause. Thus thought and action resting on reasons are not determined by a cause outside them. The causality of the cause, its efficacy, is an act of the very thought or action that it causes. This structure extends to laws: laws that apply to judgement as judgement governs a judgement in the manner of being known *in* this very judgement to govern it; and laws of action, practical laws, govern an action in the manner of being thought *in* this very action to govern it. So laws of judgement and action do not govern from the outside. They are laws in the manner of being legislated in the very acts that they govern. So intellect and will are autonomous; they are self-legislating. Bakhurst is right: to act in the light of reasons is to be autonomous.

### **EDUCATION, THE KIND OF PASSION IT IS**

Autonomy is the end of education. It is easy to fall into puzzlement regarding the possibility of education so conceived. For, representing autonomy as a condition that she who educates brings about in him whom she educates, we think of education as falling under the category of a transaction that yokes together an agent and a patient. Indeed, teaching and learning is a primary example of Aristotle’s of this category. One may feel confounded by the

notion that an autonomous power could result from suffering something from another, from being acted upon by another.

It would be worthwhile to articulate the source of the puzzlement at length. I shall be brief. We said that an act of the will or the intellect, an intention or a judgement, represents the ground on which it rests, which is its ground in virtue of being so represented. Moreover, it represents the laws according to which it joins ground and grounded; the laws of an autonomous power are its own deed. An autonomous power determines itself, with respect to both its laws and its particular acts. Education, then, if it is to determine someone as a subject of an autonomous power, must, while involving someone's acting on her who is being educated, at the same time be the latter's self-determination. It is difficult to hold these two characters of education together in one concept.

The difficulty of comprehending how teaching and learning, educating and being educated, are possible given that their end is autonomy—which, it seems, cannot be something received from someone other—has long been felt. Plato's idea that learning is recollecting responds to it. From then on until today, the difficulty has informed thought about education. Bakhurst touches upon it when he contemplates the relationship of active and passive elements in learning (Bakhurst, 2011, p. 140). Let us consider more closely the passion in education, with a view to framing a concept that conjoins passion with autonomy.

The first thing to note, in Aristotelian fashion, is that 'passion' is said in many ways. In *De Anima*, Aristotle distinguishes ways of speaking of passion, as does St. Thomas Aquinas in *Summa Theologiae*.<sup>2</sup> The fundamental distinction is this. In one kind of passion, a determination of the patient is destroyed by an agent that exhibits the contrary determination. As the agent acts upon the patient, the patient's determination is driven out and replaced by its contrary. In a second kind of passion, a potential of the patient is actualised by an agent in whom the same potential is actual. Here, the patient does not lose a determination, but is perfected with respect to the relevant determination: the same determination was present potentially, imperfectly, and now is present actually, perfectly, as it was all the while in the agent. In the first case, then, something is made other by something contrary; in the second, something comes to be itself by the action of something like. It is evident that learning must be a passion of the second kind. Only then can learning, while involving the teacher's acting upon the learner, be the learner's self-determination.<sup>3</sup>

### **THE IDEA THAT EDUCATION TURNS THE CHILD FROM AN ANIMAL INTO A PERSON, ITS INCONSISTENCY WITH THE IDEA THAT THE END OF EDUCATION IS AUTONOMY**

However the concept of education is further articulated, it must signify a passion of the second kind. Following John McDowell, Bakhurst maintains that education turns a mere animal into a thinker and agent (*cf.* McDowell, 1996, p. 125). Now, this entails that education is not a passion of the second kind.

A newborn child *is* an animal; she *becomes* a person by the agency of him who educates her, initiating her into a social and historical form of life. This aligns animal and person with first and second nature: the dispositions and powers with which we are born, being born animals, are provided by our first nature; the powers and dispositions that govern us as thinkers and agents are provided by second nature. First nature provides sensation and feeling, making us animals; second nature provides thought and reasoning, making us persons. ‘Mind’, writes Bakhurst, ‘is a gift of nature, but it is second, rather than “first”, nature that is the provider’ (p. 150). There is a transition from animal to person, from unminded to minded, from pre-rational to rational;<sup>4</sup> this transition is the deed of education, through which the child internalises a social and historical form as its second nature.

This conception of education places it outside the second kind of passion distinguished above. A human being is said to have a first nature and a second nature, being an animal in virtue of the first, a person in virtue of the second. He has no nature that embraces his first and his second nature, making them one nature. In consequence, the change he undergoes as a second nature is impressed upon the child by a parent or teacher is not a transition in which one and the same determination, present in child and teacher, is raised from potentiality to actuality. And then education and learning cannot be the child’s perfecting itself; education and learning then cannot be, in Aristotle’s word, the child’s growth into itself.

### THE IDEA OF CHANGING INTO A PERSON, ITS INCOHERENCE

The idea that a human being is born an animal and turned into a person by the agency of a socio-historical form is not compatible with the idea that the end of education is autonomy. This encourages us to scrutinise this idea: the idea of a change into a person. Indeed, as we shall see, this idea is incoherent. It disrespects the depth to which reason defines the human being.

McDowell maintains that there is a species, the human being, which spans the difference of animal from person: some human beings are animals, the very young ones, others are persons, the older ones. And he asserts that the individual child spans this difference: being an animal, she becomes a person. Now, as Bakhurst’s habit of opposition rightly indicates, the concept of a person is of the same kind as the concept of an animal. And both are of the same kind as the concept of a plant, as these concepts appear in Aristotle’s *De Anima* and henceforth in any thought on the matter. So it may be helpful to consider the analogous claims one step further down. Let us imagine a species that spans the difference of plant from animal, and an individual that, being a plant, becomes an animal. This may appear a digression; I hope it to be an effective way to dislodge the conception of reason as a power that attaches, or not, to an independently constituted substance.

An animal is a perceiver, *aisthetikon*, in the broad sense: a subject of sensory consciousness. A perceiver possesses a threefold system of powers: *aisthesis* or sense perception in the narrow sense, sensory desire

or *epithumia*, and the feeling of pleasure and pain. If there is to be an individual that, being a plant, becomes an animal, the change will have to consist of its acquiring the animal powers. Let us imagine a kind of cat, much like a lion; we call it a mion. All cats are born blind. So is the mion. It is not that a newborn mion does not open its eyes. It does, but when it does, it does not see. The same holds for all its senses. After a few weeks, its powers of sense perception awake. During this time, mother and father lick the newborn mion incessantly. When the parents have a psychical disorder and do not lick, the mion remains in the numb state of its birth and dies after a few more weeks. Shall we say that a mion is born a plant and transformed into an animal, the transformation being effected by the licking of its parents? This seems absurd. Why?

We might try saying that an individual is an animal according to its species. As consciousness belongs to the species *mion*, the newborn mion is an animal. The analogous assertion has been made for the concept of a person: this title, it has been said, must be bestowed on any human being, irrespective of whether she has—not yet, or no more—the power of thought and reasoning, on account of her belonging to a species to which this power belongs. This answer may be fine, but it must be developed. If we go no further, it may appear merely to propose a convention for using words as opposed to conveying metaphysical knowledge. This requires that we inquire what the species has to do with the individual. I want to suggest that either the species is the form of the individual or else the individual belongs to a species according to its form. (I leave this open because the question is difficult and we need not resolve it.) The form of an individual is the ground of its being, its being one, its being good. That is: it is that to what we refer in explaining the existence of the individual, it is that through which we conceive its unity, and it is that by reference to which we judge its perfection. The concept of an animal attaches to the individual according to its species because the concept of an animal signifies a character of the individual's form: a character of its being, being one, being good.

Obviously, an adequate exposition of this thought would take us too far afield. I try to convey the idea, limiting my attention to the form of an individual as the ground of its being one, the principle of its unity.

Life in general is an activity that exhibits a teleological order. Changes caught up in it are joined together in this way: one thing happens for the sake of another; one thing happens so that another may happen. This teleological order returns to itself; it does not hang on an ultimate end outside the totality of the changes that constitute the activity. Any vital change is for the sake of the life activity of which it is an element and thereby for its own sake. The roots of a tree take in nutrients for the sake of the life of the plant. And the life of the tree is nothing other than, among other things, its roots' taking in nutrients. The teleology of life is an internal teleology, internal purposiveness, and a living being is an end in itself. We give an account of a species of life as we describe in general terms the form of a living being, as we articulate its activity, showing how it sustains itself. And we comprehend what is happening here and now and its purposive order as we refer it to this general account of the relevant life activity.

Let this suffice as a description of the plant. Now, a first mark of the animal of which we may take note is this: there are acts of the animal that exhibit a teleological structure in order to comprehend which it does not suffice to refer what is happening to a general account of the animal's life activity. Rather, we must make reference to a principle of the act *in the individual*. Such is the case when the animal goes after something. For example, a generic representation of its form relates lions to antelopes; but representing this individual lion as being after this individual antelope, we join the lion to the antelope not only through this general notion, but through a principle that resides in the individual lion, namely, its desire for antelopes, which is specified to this individual antelope by perception. This provisional observation already suggests that an animal, a subject of desire, perception, locomotion, is an individual in a different—we dare say, more intense—way from that of a mere plant: teleology, freedom, spontaneity, which are characters of living in general, belong to the animal not only as exemplifying something general; they belong to it as individual.

While there is a general nexus of lion to antelope, its specification to an individual involves the animal powers; it involves desire and perception. Conversely, without animal powers, in the plant, what is other figures in its life activity not as an individual, but generically, that is, as stuff: water, nitrogen, etc. The heightened individuality of the animal resides in this, that it relates in its life activity to individuals as individuals. It is an *individual toward individuals*.

Its higher individuality comes to the fore in the character that the concept of food acquires in its application to the animal. In this application, the concept is double: what nourishes is both external and internal, both other and alike. On the one hand, it is an individual, the antelope, say, from which the lion distinguishes itself. On the other hand, it is the nutrients, stuff provided by the flesh of the antelope. The animal distinguishes nourishment as other from nourishment as alike, thereby circumscribing itself as an individual. No such distinction applies to the nourishment of the plant, and this is the ground of a certain impotence in plant life, of the whole in relation to its parts. For example, we may conceive the branch of a tree to relate to its trunk as to the earth: providing it with the stuff that nourishes it. (This conception is put into practice in grafting.) By contrast, as Aristotle remarks in a stunning passage, each animal carries an earth inside it: its stomach.

As the whole is powerless perfectly to subordinate its parts, growth and reproduction are not clearly distinct in the plant. Considering a branch as a tree, the trunk as its earth, we see the growth of the tree, its growing a branch, as the coming to be of a tree. A tree grows into a tree of trees (of trees of trees, and so on). We consider the same point from the opposite direction when we say that the nutritive activity of the plant does not perfectly return to the individual plant. By contrast, the growth of an animal does not give rise to more animals. Its nutrition perfectly returns to it as individual, sustaining it as individual.

As an animal is an individual toward individuals, it exhibits a twofold articulation into parts: one defines it in relation to the other, another in relation to itself. On the one hand, the animal is articulated into members, or

extremities. The principle of this articulation is its power of self-movement: describing the articulation is describing the animal's ways of locomotion. On the other hand, the animal is articulated into organs, entrails, intestines, through which it relates to stuff.

We recognise the higher unity of the animal when we consider what can be predicated of the whole animal, as opposed to its parts, namely, any act of consciousness, desire, perception, pleasure, and any action whose principle is consciousness. By contrast, the only act that can be said of the plant as a whole is growth. Its growth realises itself in a manifold of changes, but none of these is attributed to the plant as a whole. The same holds for vital changes in the animal that do not depend on consciousness. This is no accident; it follows from the nature of the animal powers as we have laid it out: consciousness, animality, constitutes the animal as the unity that it is, individual toward individual. Therefore, the animal powers and their acts are originally said of the individual, the whole animal. That is their logical nature.

Perhaps we may allow ourselves a polemical aside. There is a notion that we can further our understanding of the animal powers, of consciousness, and its specific shape in specific species, by investigating suitable parts of the animal and their operations, sense organs, say, the nervous system, the brain. This notion rests on a failure to grasp the logical nature of the animal powers in distinction to the vegetative power. We deepen our understanding of the nutritive activity of a living being by investigating changes whose subject are parts of the living being. For the nutritive activity consists in these changes, ordered as they are in a system of internal purposiveness. There is no parallel relationship of acts of consciousness to changes in parts of the animal. The *sole* object of the study of animal powers is what the animal, the whole animal, does.<sup>5</sup> There is a bitter irony in the fact that this latter approach attracts the reproach of being behaviourist, which is meant to imply that it attends only to the outer manifestation of consciousness, as opposed to its inner source, while a study of happenings in nerves and the brain is supposed to get at this inner reality. In truth, the latter study is barred from so much as making contact with its alleged subject: the inner of the animal.<sup>6</sup>

The form of an individual is the principle of its being, its being one, its being good. The concept of animal, signifying sensory consciousness, the threefold animal power, signifies a kind of form, which we sought to display as a manner of being one. Now, we apprehend the newborn mion through its form and thereby through the concept of this kind of form, the concept of this kind of unity: the unity of an individual toward individuals, which is articulated into members externally and organs internally, whose reproduction as individual is strictly distinct from the reproduction of its species, and so on. That is, we apprehend the newborn mion through the concept of consciousness. Consciousness is present in the mion as a character of its form. The newborn mion is a perceiver: such is its being, such is its being one, such is its being good. This is so even while its animal powers have not yet been awakened, even as it is blind and deaf and numb. This is how deep consciousness, animality, reaches into the individual animal. Hence,

when the animal powers of the mion awake after a few weeks, this is not a transformation of a plant into an animal. It is the growth of an animal into itself. And consequently, even though the young mion's consciousness will not awaken unless its parents lick it, this licking does not cause a change of form. Rather, it is a condition of maturation, which maturation is the mion's self-activity and has no cause outside it.

I wish to suggest that what I said about animality holds equally for personality or rationality. As the concept of animal, so does the concept of person signify a kind of form: it signifies a character of the individual's principle of being, being one, being good. Boethius defines a person as an individual substance of a rational nature. I am suggesting that he is right when, in this definition, he represents reason not as a power an individual may acquire—in which case the being, the unity and the goodness of this individual would have to be conceived independently of this power—but as the inner character of the individual's nature, or, as I have been saying, form. Again, it would be a most worthy enterprise to undertake to develop this thought, and again, I shall only give a sketch, perhaps even less of one. We saw that the animal is an individual toward individuals, since its vital movements are governed by sensory consciousness, by feeling, desire and perception. Now, a person is a subject not only of sensory consciousness, but of rational consciousness. A person is a subject of concepts. Thus its self-movement is of a different character, which we indicate by calling it intentional action. Acting intentionally, a person is not only conscious of the individual it desires, but is conscious of itself as acting in pursuit of it; he not only takes the apple, but does so with knowledge that this is what he is doing. His action is as such an application of the concept of his action. As a person's self-movement involves the concept of this movement, his powers of self-movement involve his possession of the corresponding concepts. His powers of self-movement are as such understood by the person. But now, the articulation of powers of self-movement is nothing other than the articulation of the self-mover into members. It follows that the articulation of a person into members includes the person's possession of the concept of this articulation. The concepts we possess of our own members, of arm and leg, hand and foot, do not relate to their object from the outside as to something given in experience, not even the experience of action. The acquisition of these concepts is nothing other than the acquisition of the powers of self-movement that define the members of which they are the concepts.

We said of the animal, sensory consciousness is the principle of its members, even as its animal powers have not yet been awakened. An animal is articulated as a perceiver, even as it does not yet perceive. The mion's legs are animal legs, they are legs of consciousness, we may say, even as the mion lies still and numb during its first days of life. We must say the same of the human baby. Reason is the principle of its members, even as the power of concepts has not yet awakened in him. He is articulated as a mover-according-to-concepts, even as he cannot move according to concepts yet. The legs of a human newborn are rational legs, personal legs, we may say, even as he moves them randomly during his first weeks of life.

## EDUCATION AS SELF-ACTIVITY

Let us return to education. It cannot be the office of education to turn an animal into a person, for there is no such transformation. No species spans that difference, nor is there a change of an individual that spans it. For the concept of person signifies a character of the individual's form, its principle of being, being one, being good. This is as well, for if there were such a thing as a change from animal to person, it would not be a passion of the second kind; the child's being educated could not be its growing into itself; it could not be its self-determination and its end could not be autonomy. The child is a person from birth, for reason is the character of its form. Now let us enquire how conceiving of the human being in this way enables us to see education as the child's own deed.

As a child is a person, an individual of rational nature, from birth, we are free to consider the possibility that, while reason in the child is awakened only through education, it is the basis and condition of education. Kant writes in the introduction to the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*:

There is no doubt that all our knowledge begins with experience. For what else should awaken the power of knowledge into exercise, did this not happen through objects that affect our senses. [. . .] Hence, in us, no knowledge precedes experience in time, and with the latter, all knowledge begins. However, even while all our knowledge begins with experience, it is not on that account the case that all knowledge originates from experience. For it may well be that even our empirical knowledge is a composite of that which we receive through impressions and that which our own power of knowledge (merely occasioned by experience) supplies from itself (Kant, 1787, B1).

The power of knowledge is awakened by sensory affection, Kant says. It may yet be that any act of the power includes and thus presupposes knowledge, which on that account cannot originate from experience, but must be supplied by the power from itself. Of course, this knowledge, which the power supplies from itself, will be actual, it will itself be awake, only in acts of the power that in their turn depend on sensory affection. Now let me vary Kant's words. There is no doubt, I say, that all activity of reason begins with education. For what else should awaken the rational power into act, did this not happen through other human beings who engage it. Hence, in the human child, no act of reason precedes education in time, and with the latter, all rational activity begins. However, even if all use of reason begins with education, it is not on that account the case that all originates from education. It may well be that the education is a composite of that which is provided by him who educates and that which the child, its rational nature, supplies from itself. The power of reason is awakened by education, I say. But education includes and presupposes an act of reason on the part of the child, which therefore the child must supply from itself.

Kant's thought and ours are more than analogous. What defines reason and is supplied by it as a condition of education is a form of representation that acquires content in education. This representation, which the child

supplies from itself, is nothing other than the formal representation of the power. This power is autonomous, its acts accord with laws through representing those laws. Hence, the *a priori* representation provided by the power—which is nothing other than a representation of this power—is the representation of a law, a general representation, and of specific acts as in accord with, through springing from, this general representation. The representation the child supplies from itself is the formal representation of what one does and how and why, subsuming a representation of what she is doing as grounded in the former. When this form of representation arises, at some time between one and two years, education can begin. In its turn, this form of representation is not brought on by education, which, on the contrary, presupposes it, but arises in the process of maturation, which is the child's own deed and has no cause outside it. Education acts through this formal rational representation of the child, and insofar as it does so, it is the self-determination of her who is being educated. This holds for all forms of rational activity; as an example, I consider teaching and learning of a form of *poiesis* or production.

Education in large part proceeds through the parent providing an example that the child seeks to imitate. This involves a certain kind of consciousness on the part of him who acts in such a way as to follow someone's example. In order for A to follow the example set by B, it does not suffice that A be doing what B did, nor that A be doing that thing because B did it. During the 1950s, a certain behaviour, namely, washing potatoes in a nearby stream, was observed slowly to spread in a group of Japanese macaques. One individual began to wash; three months later, the behaviour was observed in its mother and two playmates; within three years, 40 percent of the group washed potatoes. So one macaque begins to wash, then others take to doing the same, and as those are at first close associates, it is natural to suppose that there is some causal relation. However, there is no reason to suppose that any macaque was following the example of another. It may have been like this: one macaque begins to wash. Another is thereby positioned to observe that dirt comes off potatoes in water. Desiring that the dirt be off its potatoes, it puts them in water. In this way, the second macaque comes to do the same thing as the one that provided for this observation; this identity, however, their doing the same thing, does not enter the consciousness of the macaque (see Tomasello and Call, 1997, pp. 276).

The macaque wants its potato clean. The act of a conspecific provides it with an observation that makes it aware of a means to this end. The identity of its act with that of the other is external to the consciousness that underlies and is realised in its action. It is the reverse in the case of a child imitating a parent or sibling. A human child, one year old, takes an acute pleasure in doing what a parent or sibling is doing, asking for and rejoicing in the shared recognition of that sameness. An arbitrary example of such a thing: parent and child sit at the table, and, with much laughter and excitement, they alternate in putting their head down on the table. Here it is out of the question to explain the child's action by her interest in a result achieved by putting her head on the table. There is no such result. The sole interest of the child is this: to do what the parent is doing *in mutual recognition of*

*this identity*. I should not speak of education in relation to such a scene. But the scene shows the germ of the consciousness that is at work in education and underlies its possibility. For in this scene the child is conscious of something to do: putting one's head on the table. It is a consciousness of something that is here and is there, may be there again and again, in indefinitely many places an indefinite number of times. That is to say, it is the germ of a consciousness of something general as general. Moreover, the child recognises this consciousness to be shared, even, incipiently, to be shared generally: she may allow her brother into the fun, and now there are three people putting their heads on the table, enjoying the community of consciousness they have established. There is no such behaviour among animals, in no species. This can be established empirically; it can also be known *a priori*. For such behaviour is not intelligible as an isolated thing, but only as belonging to the development of a being that is such as to be conscious of the general and to act from this consciousness. That is to say, it belongs to the development of a being whose form is reason; it is to be explained by this form.

The above scene is not one of education. But education is only a small step away. Consider a child, three years old, let us say, learning to carve a stick. The child wants to carve his stick; however, his intention is indeterminate, as he has no distinct idea of what it is to carve. He knows it involves a knife and somehow applying the knife to the wood. But that is about it. And yet he wants to do it. His intention has a determinate content and thus is capable of governing action as it contains a reference to his parent's consciousness: wanting to carve, he wants to do what she, the parent is doing or does. This consciousness of the general, of the action form, carving, is a shared consciousness; and it is comprehended to be shared by child and parent. And therefore, the parent's conception of how to carve governs the child's action not from the outside, but rather as giving determinate content to the child's own consciousness, which is a shared consciousness. The shared consciousness of the general, which we saw emerging in our scene of heads being put on the table, the form of which the child supplies from himself, allows a content to figure in the child's will that he cannot supply from himself. In this transaction, or interaction, therefore, the child is not moved by something outside and extraneous, but by himself, by his own rational consciousness. In due course, the child's dependence on the parent for content will diminish. But all throughout the process, it is the child's own will that rules, joined together as it is with the will of the parent in a shared consciousness of the action form.

Consciousness of the general begins to emerge in the forms of joint consciousness that mark what Michael Tomasello calls the nine-month revolution. In the year following this revolution, consciousness of the general quickly acquires a more determinate shape. Consider pretend-play, which is in full bloom at two years of age. A child and a parent, or two children, pretend that an object has a function that in fact it does not have. A function is something general: it is a general use of the object. In pretend-play, then, the representation of how to use this and that is separated from the representation of its instrumental efficacy. The aim of doing what it is that

one is doing, the aim of satisfying a concept, of acting from a concept, is separated from the aim of achieving whatever result is the result of so acting. And the children engaged in pretend-play are conscious of this separation. I said above that, while the macaque wants the potato clean and, perceiving suitable means, ends up doing what another macaque does, the one year old wants to do what another is doing, potential results being irrelevant. In pretend play, at two to three years of age, this logical distinction is *inside the child's own consciousness*.

In our culture, objects are made specifically for pretend-play, toys. In fact, it is much more fun to take objects that have a real use and pretend that they have another. A two year old may take a pencil and pretend that it is a toothbrush.<sup>7</sup> Doing this, she may look at a parent and laugh, expecting that the parent agrees with her in finding this comical. Reflecting on the consciousness involved in this, we see that there is a consciousness of how the thing is used, which is a general thought; there is a consciousness of the particular, of what is happening here and now as in disagreement with the general; there is an understanding of the significance of this disagreement; and there is a consciousness of this understanding as shared. Or again, children, as soon as they have any facility with words at all, around two years of age, take the greatest pleasure in mispronouncing and misusing words. Again, here is reflective consciousness of the general in its relation to the here and now.

There has been striking systematic research on pretend-play, which bears out the point. In relation to something touched on above, the rational nature of the human body, I report an anecdote. At the age of one and a half years—he was barely able to walk—my oldest son observed an older child who had a stiff leg and could not walk right. He imitated this walk, for his own amusement and for mine; that is, he showed it me and desired me to find it funny as he did. This was not nice; but of course he could not know that. What is noteworthy about this scene is that it shows that, at this age, he walked according to a concept, he possessed the idea of how one walks, and he recognised this concept as shared among us. Indeed, when our third child, twelve months old, began to walk, she exhibited beaming pride, not only at being able to walk, but at joining us, the walkers.

These considerations make us wary of a claim originating with Wittgenstein, that education in general, and learning a language in particular, involves what Wittgenstein calls '*abrichten*'. The word signifies the impression of a habit upon another being in a manner that does not involve a consciousness on the part of the latter of the rule that is being impressed upon it. Bakhurst appears to subscribe to the idea when he writes: 'This account represents learning as a movement from a non-rationally secured conformity with correct practice, through increasing knowledge of correct practice, to a state of rational command of the grounds of correct practice' (2011, p. 138). As animals are not conscious of the general, *abrichten* is the only manner in which it is possible to inform their behaviour. If children were born animals, the first act of education would have to be *abrichten*.

Indeed, the metaphysical conviction that the child is an animal that becomes a person through education seems to be the only possible source of the notion that *abrichten* plays an essential role in the development of children. Observation surely does not suggest it. However, a child is a person in virtue of its form. Through the causality of this form, the child grows into the form of consciousness that makes education possible. Education begins with shared consciousness of doing the same, which arises at around nine months of age and is incipient consciousness of the general. From then on, *abrichten* is no longer possible; the form of the child's consciousness excludes it. Before that time, there is a logical possibility of *abrichten* a human child. In point of empirical fact, it seems very difficult, if not impossible. In any case, such *abrichten* has no inner relation to the education that comes later.

We distinguished a form of representation, which reason supplies from itself and which is presupposed in and underlies education. It is likely that its development in maturation depends on interactions of parents and children. As for the licking of our mions, such interaction will be a condition of undistorted maturation, not a cause. This need not occlude the fact that the formal representation of reason is awakened only in education. A mere form of representation is not an act on its own, but only insofar as it is the form of representing a suitable content. This content reason, the form of the child, does not supply from itself. Therefore the power of reason can only be awakened into action in interactions of the kind we described, in which the formal representation that constitutes the power of reason is provided with a content in a joint consciousness of parent and child. In this resides the necessity of education upon which Bakhurst insists. It is a mistake to seek to establish this necessity by representing the power of reason as second nature. As we saw, if reason were acquired from someone else in education, education could not be an act of reason in the child, and then it could not be the child's self-activity. Distinguishing power and habit, and insisting that the power becomes actual only in the formation of habit, we recognise the formation of habit in education as the self-activity of the child: the activity of reason, which is the child's form. And then the end of education can be autonomy, which, after all, is not capable of being brought about by something other. What the child receives in education is not the power, but a determinate shape of the power, a habit. This is self-determination, even while someone else is acting on her who is being educated. And this is how the concept of second nature has been used in the past: signifying habit, which follows power.<sup>8</sup> Second nature is habit, power, first. So second nature is not something other than first nature; it is its perfection; habit is the perfection of power. As the child is educated, it is not transformed; it does not acquire a new form; it grows into its own form. Education is the child's growth into itself.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

A version of this paper appears as a chapter in David Bakhurst and Paul Fairfield (eds.), *Education and Conversation* (London, Bloomsbury Academic, in press). I am grateful to Bloomsbury Publishing for permission to include it in this symposium.

## NOTES

1. See Bakhurst, 2011, p. 124: 'Autonomy is a power: the power to determine what to think and to do in the light of what there is reason to think and do'.
2. *De Anima*, B 5, 417a21-b16; *Summa Theologiae*, Ia, qu. 79, art. 2.
3. It follows that while teaching and educating may involve the destruction of a state and its replacement by its contrary, as when error is replaced by knowledge and evil by good, this is not essential to the transaction and not contained in its original concept (as St. Thomas Aquinas remarks in his commentary on *De Anima*, Sect. 370). Developing this original concept, we consider teaching as leading from ignorance to knowledge, rather than from error to knowledge, and education as effecting a transition from indeterminate character to virtue, rather than from vice to virtue.
4. See Bakhurst, 2011, p. 10 for this series of oppositions.
5. This is the significance of the observation that it is the animal that sees, not its eye, an observation that cannot be understood without reflection on the manner in which an animal is one. The same observation applies to thought: it is the human being who thinks, not her brain. (Cf. Bakhurst's illuminating discussion of what he calls 'personalism' in Bakhurst, 2008.) In this case, the confusion is more extreme yet. It is right to think of metabolism as consisting in a series of changes in the organs, in a broad sense, of the living being. It is wrong to think that, in parallel, sense organs supply something in whose changes acts of sensibility may reside. However, it is right, indeed it is essential to the concept of a sense, that there are sense organs. By contrast, the ostensible idea of an organ of thinking is no idea at all. So there is not even something of which one might wrongly think that the study of the changes it undergoes may provide a more thorough comprehension of what thinking is (cf. Rödl, 2014).
6. A further irony: the relevant insight can be gathered from reading *De Anima*, B5. And Myles Burnyeat, 1992, who had a glimpse of this insight, drew the inference that therefore *De Anima* must be junked as it is incompatible with contemporary ideas. The truth is that reading *De Anima* may save us from the rubbish that comes in the train of those ideas. However, it is not necessary to read *De Anima* to this end. One may be led on by the truth, as Aristotle is fond of putting it.
7. See the discussion of this example, and of pretend play in general, in Tomasello and Rokaczy, 2003, pp. 130–32.
8. The distinction of power and habit, and thereby of first and second nature, is occluded by the habit of Bakhurst and McDowell, to speak of conceptual capacities, as opposed to, say, the power to think, or the power of concepts. Conceptual capacities are habits: determinations—self-determinations—of the power to think.

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