

# Intention and Representation: Searle's 'Internal' Thesis

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The first part of this paper will examine the intricate connections between intention and representation by way of John Searle's recent and provocative analysis of intentionality. In his earlier work on 'speech acts', it may be recalled, to operate a language meaningfully, and thus realise our intentions, is to perform one of five basic kinds of acts according to particular rules and conventions. So, for example, those acts committing speakers to the truth of propositions expressed, such as characterisations, descriptions, explanations, and so forth, are classified as 'assertive'. Searle suggests that authors of fictional works intentionally pretend (in a non-deceptive sense) to 'perform such acts against a background of specific conventions'.<sup>1</sup> Something like this conception of speech acts was first publicised during the seventies in literary critical circles by Ohmann, Pratt and Fish.<sup>2</sup> The second part of this paper begins to re-assess the connection between intention and representation within the literary-based arts, largely by drawing upon the contrasting suggestions of the later Wittgenstein and his followers. Ironically perhaps, token references to the role intention plays in artistic representation, whilst common enough, belie their often elusive and problematical relationship. Nowhere are the sheer complexities of the relationship more pointedly exposed than in Searle.

Intentionality, in short, is the property of mental states or events, such as intention, hope, fear, desire, and belief, by which they are directed at states of affairs or are 'of' or 'about' objects, irrespective

- 1 See J. R. Searle, *Intentionality*, Cambridge, 1983, p. 166, for a brief summary of the five purportedly basic categories of speech acts—assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations—detailed in Searle's 'A taxonomy of illocutionary acts' (1975) in *Expression and Meaning*, Cambridge, 1979, esp. pp. 12–20. (Searle's collection also contains his application of speech acts to fictional works, namely, 'The logical status of fictional discourse' (1975), esp. pp. 61–70).
- 2 See R. M. Ohmann, 'Speech Acts and the Definition of Literature,' *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 4: 1 (Winter 1971): 1–19; M. L. Pratt, *Toward a Speech Act Theory of Literary Discourse*, Bloomington, 1977, and S. F. Fish, 'How to Do Things with Austin and Searle' (1977) in *Is There a Text in This Class?*, Cambridge, 1980, pp. 197–245.

of whether these states of affairs or objects exist or not. How any intentional state is realised—whether pictorially, linguistically, or behaviourally—is considered ‘irrelevant to its logical properties’.<sup>3</sup> A speechless infant may want succour just as an adult may grieve in silence. In other words, intentionality in any of its forms—intention being but one amongst many—is not, according to Searle, ‘essentially and necessarily linguistic’; indeed, their ‘logical dependence is precisely the reverse’ in that ‘language, supposedly, is logically dependent upon intentionality’.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, contends Searle, every intentional state ‘is intrinsically a representation’ which is not dependent upon ‘our use of it as a representation in the manner of speech or pictures’.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, intentional states do not operate in isolation, but as part of a network or cluster of beliefs, desires, intentions, and the like. Such a network, in turn, both presupposes and is permeated by a background of ‘nonrepresentational mental capacities’.<sup>6</sup> That is to say, the multifarious forms of intentionality presuppose a fundamental set of ‘non-representational’ abilities and skills of mind. In effect, Searle regards such a background as translatable into basic kinds of ‘procedural’ knowledge, namely, our ‘knowing how to do things’ and, more debatably, ‘knowing how things are or work’.<sup>7</sup>

What in all this does Searle mean by ‘representation’? Re-tracing his thesis in more detail, we find the term first characterising the relationship between an intentional state and the object or state of affairs at which it is directed. Searle asserts that intentional states invariably represent states of affairs and objects ‘in the same sense of “represent” that speech acts represent objects and states of affairs’.<sup>8</sup>

3 Searle, *Intentionality*, p. 15.

4 Searle, *Intentionality*, p. 5. From Searle’s point of view, intentionality is only said to be *pedagogically* explicable in terms of language. The question of what, if any, *conceptual* priority there might be has been succinctly surveyed by, e.g., D. M. Rosenthal, ‘Intentionality’ (1986) in *Rerepresentations*, ed. Stuart Silvers, Dordrecht, 1989, pp. 311–39.

5 Searle, *Intentionality*, p. 22.

6 Searle, *Intentionality*, p. 20.

7 Searle, *Intentionality*, pp. 20, 143. Not all of us would unquestioningly accept that ‘know-how about the way things are’ or ‘know how things are’ is invariably classifiable as procedural knowledge (or ‘knowing *how* to do something’), and not as propositional knowledge (that is, ‘knowing *that* something is the case’); initially contrasted by Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of Mind*, London, 1949, pp. 27–32, 40–45, 59–60, 133–35.

8 Searle, *Intentionality*, pp. 4, 11.

parallels between intentionality and speech acts are borne out in at least four ways which we shall illustrate with the libretto by Arrigo Boito of Giuseppe Verdi's four-act opera *Otello* (1886).

Just as the Venetians and Cypriots in Act One initially predict that the storm will overwhelm the returning fleet, so, too, can they fear that the storm will overwhelm the fleet. In the first case—an illocutionary or complete speech act—we are able to distinguish between the propositional content, 'that the storm will overwhelm the fleet', and the assertive illocutionary force with which the propositional content is presented, namely, 'the Venetians and Cypriots predict'. Similarly, in the other case of fear—an intentional state—we can discriminate between the intentional content, 'that the storm will overwhelm the fleet', and the psychological manner or mode in which the Venetians and Cypriots have that intentional content. Next, members of, say, the assertive class of speech acts—predictions being one of them—in some way match or fail to match the world and to that extent can be said to have a 'word-to-world' direction of fit. Similarly, intentional states—such as fear in our example—can be realised truly or falsely and can thus be described as having a 'mind-to world' direction of fit. Thirdly, in the performance of assertive illocutionary acts possessing a propositional content, Searle believes we simultaneously and necessarily express a corresponding intentional state with that propositional content. Hence, if the Cypriots and Venetians make a prediction that the storm will overwhelm the fleet, then they invariably express at the same time the belief that the storm will do so. A shift in the illocutionary class from the assertive to, say, the commissive makes no difference. So, if the Cypriots had volunteered to save the fleet, then they would have expressed the intention to save the fleet. Finally, where speech acts and intentional states have a direction of fit, the notion of having conditions of satisfaction or fulfilment equally applies to that speech act and its correspondingly expressed psychological state. Therefore volunteering to save the fleet will hold if and only if the expressed intention is enacted, just as predicting the resulting storm will be true or false if and only if the expressed belief proves true or false.

However, beneath the four parallels depicted, Searle admits that the notion of 'representation is 'conveniently vague'.<sup>9</sup> Rather than

9 Searle, *Intentionality*, p. 11. In the first of a series of papers largely incorporated within his 1983 book, Searle, 'Intentionality and the Use of Language' in *Meaning and Use*, ed. Avishai Margalit, Dordrecht, 1979, overtly concedes that the concept of representation remains 'an unanalysed notion' (p. 195).

leaving his readers with too elastic a conception, Searle stipulates that representation is 'entirely exhausted by the analogy with speech acts'.<sup>10</sup> So, being a representation is tantamount to having a propositional content and a psychological mode; the content determining the set of conditions of fulfilment or satisfaction under certain aspects and the mode determining the direction of fit of the content. In other words, representation is defined here in terms of its content and its mode, not in terms of its formal structure. Consequently, Searle's account of representation, by being referable to and centred upon the intentionality of mental states, fundamentally describes the content involved rather than its object. Furthermore, this conception of representation, made internal to or inherent in mental states, impels Searle to characterise it from the subject's point of view, not from a third-person perspective.

Nowhere is Searle's 'internalising' tendency more noticeable than in cases such as intentions to act because they suggest to us that there is, *prima facie*, a causal connection between mental states and the 'external world'. Consider the test-case of *Otello*. Arrigo Boito intended to draft the second-act soliloquy, 'Credo in un Dio crudel ...' If he did so with the further intention or purpose of representing Jago's malevolence or whatever, then this would prove irrelevant to Searle, whose concerns are with the immediacy of 'intention in action'.<sup>11</sup> Now, in successful instances of intentions to perform an act, Searle argues that the intentional content not only represents the action to be performed but also represents it as the one to be brought to pass by that very intention such that 'the relationship of causation is part of the *content*, not the object, of these experiences'.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, Searle's avowal that 'I can only intend what my intention can cause' seems suggestive of a confusion between, on the one hand, an (inner) experience felt to be caused and, on the other hand, the object of that experience which happens to constitute 'the [external] source of causation'.<sup>13</sup>

Hence Searle regards causality internally represented to be a self-referential part of the intentional content without quite specifying what in the content does the referring. He leaves, as noted above, further

10 Searle, *Intentionality*, p. 12.

11 Searle, *Intentionality*, pp. 105-06.

12 Searle, *Intentionality*, p. 124.

13 Searle, *Intentionality*, p. 105; the confusion was initially identified by J. H. Mohanty, 'Intentionality, Causality and Holism', *Synthese*, 61: 1 (October 1984): p. 21.

purpose or causality *per se* to the side since that would involve an 'external' analysis of the actual object of any intention to act. Yet what makes Boito's intentional drafting occur can scarcely be illuminated by Searle's admission that his 'pattern of explanation' involves a 'circle of intentionality'.<sup>14</sup> If the drafting of the soliloquy is intentional, then, by definition, there is an intention to act, but this cannot of itself cause the intentional drafting of the soliloquy. To repeat, what is required for an intentional content is not one and the same thing as what is required for the intention to put into effect. Alternatively expressed, to adopt Searle's stance is to threaten the usual distinction we make between the possession and the performance of an intention.

Misgivings about Searle's handling of representation extend even further. First of all, Searle's conceptual coupling of representation and intention within a wholly internalised perspective runs counter to the more widely accepted approach associated with Wittgenstein. The latter's influential arguments, in a reaction against the use of introspection as the appropriate method for investigating the nature of mind, lead him to the opposing position where any presumed 'inner process' stands in need of outward criteria:

An intention is embedded in its situations, in human customs and institutions. If the technique of the game of chess did not exist, I could not intend to play a game of chess. In so far as I do intend the construction of a sentence in advance, that is made possible by the fact that I can speak the language in question.<sup>15</sup>

Introspection, at best, only provides us with a psychological account of what is or was true 'for us at the time of introspecting'.<sup>16</sup> It cannot give us a definition of what is necessary for analysing a psychological concept or state. If we know in advance of introspecting what defines that concept or state, then appealing to introspection is quite superfluous. And if, by contrast, we lack such knowledge, introspection alone cannot guarantee that what we happen to undergo applies to anyone else or even to ourselves at any other

14 Searle, 'Intentionality and the Use of Language', p. 196.

15 L. J. J. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (1949), eds G. E. M. Anscombe and Rush Rhees, tr. G. E. M. Anscombe, 3rd ed., Oxford, 1967, part I, sec. 580 and 337, pp. 153, 108. For a recent review of his handling of intention and cognate concepts, see M. J. Budd, Wittgenstein's *Philosophy of Psychology*, London, 1989, esp. pp. 21-45, 125-45.

16 See Ryle, pp. 163-67; P. T. Geach, *Mental Acts*, London, 1957, pp. 21-22, 23-24, 107-11; and Budd, pp. 7-10.

time. That we were introspectively aware of a particularly threatening image of Jago when planning to see *Otello* last week cannot even begin to define the concept of forming an intention. To believe that the approaches of Wittgenstein and Searle may nonetheless be reconciled by Searle's appeal to background, to 'a set of nonrepresentational mental capacities that enable all representing to take place',<sup>17</sup> is basically illusory. Wittgenstein's behavioural or externalising perspectives might at first glance seem akin to Searle's conception of nonrepresentational background until one recalls that background is firmly tied to one's internal or mental repertoire of skills.

In the second place, the analogy by which representation is defined begins to dissolve once the difference between intentional states and speech acts is highlighted. In itself, a squeal or a scratch or a stretch means nothing. The media of speech acts—be they oral, graphic, or gestural—must be understood by listeners or readers and intended by speakers or writers in particular ways—through a body of rules and conventions—before they can even be counted 'as realisations of speech acts'.<sup>18</sup> By contrast, intentional states do not require an additional level of intentionality, that is, one of understanding and intending, for their realisation. Searle appears confident that 'forms of realisation' are irrelevant to the 'logical properties' 'of intentional states';<sup>19</sup> a confidence not entirely justified as we shall shortly see.

Thirdly, consider the reversal of our previous example, namely, Boito failed in an attempt to draft the second-act soliloquy, 'Credo in un Dio crudel ...' (in, say, his first effort to complete the libretto of *Otello*). In so far as Boito is capable of having intentions, would he also not be capable of recognising or being aware of the failure or the fulfilment of his intentions? Would this not, in turn, arise from Searle's very contention that an intentional state contains a representation of the conditions of its fulfilment or satisfaction? If so, then having recognition or awareness would itself have a particular set

17 Searle, *Intentionality*, p. 143. Contrast Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* here on *knowing how to* 'obey a rule, to make a report, to give an order, to play a game of chess' all of which 'are customs (uses, institutions)' since it is 'not possible that there should have been only one occasion' when such procedures were carried out (part 1, sec. 199, p. 81).

18 Also noted by C. B. Martin and Karl Pfeifer, 'Intentionality and the Non-Psychological', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, vol. 46, no. 4 (June 1986), p. 543.

19 Searle, *Intentionality*, p. 15.

of conditions of fulfilment or satisfaction, and, by implication, a representation of that set of conditions. Consequently, it appears that having recognition or awareness—itself an intentional state capable of operating at a second-order level—conjures circumstances of having representations of representations. Should Boito have acknowledged at some stage that he was aware of or had recognised his awareness of having failed, then we now seem to encounter representations of representations of representations.

In the face of such an objection, Searle declares that it neither leads to an infinite regression nor does it imply the addition of intentional states; indeed, he insists, albeit inconsistently, upon the view that 'the consciousness of the conditions of satisfaction ... is internal to the states in question'.<sup>20</sup> Perhaps Searle is trading upon different senses of awareness: an 'internal' one of intentional states and beliefs as against an 'external' one of 'states of affairs and events. When claiming, for example, 'Verdi was aware of *x*' where *x* is equivalent to 'Verdi was anxious about the initial reception of *Otello*', then our statement of awareness here is reducible to *x*. However, if *x* only stands for 'the initial reception of *Otello*, then the statement 'Verdi was aware of *x*' neither entails nor is entailed by *x*. In other words, the charge of regression at least in the case of 'internal' awareness seems to have dissipated.

Searle's 'internal' thesis nevertheless continues to face other kinds of doubt. For example, can intentionality in the form of recognition or awareness define intentionality (which, as summarised earlier, was first defined in terms of speech acts) and define it without circularity? Furthermore, can awareness or recognition be ascribed, not only to mental states, but equally to mechanical and physical objects such as thermostats and plants which 'are capable of responding to the presence of heat and of light respectively?'<sup>21</sup> But a purely physical or mechanical response to an occurrence is rightly regarded as neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition of being aware or having recognition. The mental state of awareness or recognition is distinguished from mere response by the possession of beliefs. In other words, Searle's previously noted attempt to define intentionality irrespective of its forms of realisation does not preclude

<sup>20</sup> Searle, *Intentionality*, p. 22; the declaration appearing in Searle, 'Intentionality and the Use of Language', p. 197, n. 7.

<sup>21</sup> As argued by Martin and Pfeifer, p. 544. Searle's response, in 'Intentionality and Its Place in Nature', *Synthese*, 61: 1 (October 1984), is to construe these cases as 'a metaphorical ascription' since such objects lack 'any perception' (p. 4).

physical dispositions to respond. To do that, his account requires something over and above mere response; it now requires an independent analysis of the concept of belief.

All in all, Searle has not succeeded in displacing the issue of 'externality' (for want of a better word) associated with representation. Even his claim to have avoided traditional ontological puzzles about intentional entities—namely, that we are dealing with relationships, not with the objects (or terms) of relationships—is eroded when taking the case of Boito's unfulfilled or unsatisfied intentional states into account. Such states cannot be about nothing since that would not allow Searle himself from the very beginning to discriminate between conscious states, such as '[u]ndirected anxiety', 'depression, and elation', and intentional ones which 'must always be about something'.<sup>22</sup> In an implicit reversal of his initial stand, Searle is driven to concede that 'Any representation is internally related to its object in the sense that it could not be that representation if it did not have *that* object'.<sup>23</sup>

If, by applying or adapting Searle, we now committed ourselves to the internalising of artistic representation when yoked to intentionality, more questions appear to be raised than resolved. How, for instance, could we perceive correctly if correctness itself is informed by the author's intentions or how we understand the thought conveyed by a work if that thought underlies the author's intentions?<sup>24</sup> The difficulties issue from three principal sources: from generally misconstruing intentions by solely aligning them with certain mental or interior processes; from more specifically confusing the concepts of intention and motive; and, rather ironically, from ignoring the intentionality of 'seeing as' or aspect perception by which artistic representation may in part be analysed.

The first source of difficulty manifests itself when investigations into an author's intentions become embroiled with his supposed inner feelings, moods, or states of consciousness. Thereafter, the connection between intention and representation can become highly

22 Searle, *Intentionality*, pp. 2, 1.

23 Searle, 'Intentionality and the Use of Language', p. 184.

24 See R. A. Wollheim, 'Seeing-as, seeing-in, and pictorial representation', in *Art and Its Objects*, 2nd edn, Cambridge, 1980, p. 205 and R. V. Scruton, 'Representation in Music' (1976) in *The Aesthetic Understanding*, London, 1983, pp. 62–65 respectively regarding these questions.

problematical. Reports by the author (or any confidante) to the effect 'I had the intention of ...', 'I was going to ...', 'I was on the point of ...', or the like 'do not express the memory of an experience'.<sup>25</sup> An intention, as Wittgenstein argues, is neither an emotion, a mood, nor yet a sensation or image. It is not a state of consciousness. It does not have genuine duration.<sup>26</sup> Consequently, no further interrogation by us of the mood or the feeling of the author at or before the period of composing will ensure that his intentions so-called are eventually and accurately recoverable; a presumption Searle, by contrast, does not share when analysing the hearer's understanding of communicative acts.<sup>27</sup> Any correlation between intentions depicted here and the results of composing seems to be virtually fortuitous. Consider the amazement expressed at revelations of the discrepancy between the actual moods or feelings of an author and those portrayed in his work contemporaneous with these moods or feelings. An acute example of the discrepancy is captured by Verdi's completion of the comic opera, *Un Giorno di Regno* (1840), immediately after his daughter, son, and wife died in rapid succession. The distortion imposed by this introspective conception of intention and its workings is a frequently recognised one at least in principle:<sup>28</sup> if intentions prove irrelevant to an author's activities when composing, then they will also be irrelevant to how we, the audience, perceive his composition when finished.

Now if the foregoing observation appears to return us to the familiar sounds of the 'intentional fallacy' voiced by Wimsatt and Beardsley almost half a century ago,<sup>29</sup> a small note of caution should be struck. It will readily be recalled that both men argued as follows. Since what matters in our understanding of a work is the work itself and not the extraneous circumstances surrounding its making, then any search for the artist's prior intention is neither a genuine nor a pertinent act of understanding that work. However, amongst the

25 To quote L. J. J. Wittgenstein, *Zettel* (1948), eds G. E. M. Anscombe and G. H. von Wright, tr. G. E. M. Anscombe, Oxford, 1967, sec. 44, p. 10.

26 Wittgenstein, *Zettel*, sec. 45, p. 10.

27 See J. R. Searle, *Speech Acts*, Cambridge, 1969, pp. 48-50.

28 See, e.g., R. A. Wollheim, 'Art and Its Objects' (1968) in *Art and Its Objects*, 2nd edn, Cambridge, 1980, sec. 13, p. 19.

29 W. K. Wimsatt and M. C. Beardsley, 'The Intentional Fallacy' (1946) in W. K. Wimsatt, *The Verbal Icon*, London, 1970, pp. 3-18; an accusation still maintained in Beardsley's later re-examination of the fallacy, 'Intention and Interpretation' in *The Aesthetic Point of View*, eds M. J. Wreen and D. M. Callen, Ithaca, 1982, esp pp. 193-203.

difficulties facing this fallacy is the problem of separating an intention from its means of expression. If, following Wimsatt and Beardsley, it were only relevant to consider what an artist intends in exclusive terms of what his or her artefact makes publicly manifest, 'then is it not also relevant to ask, 'Manifest to whom?''<sup>30</sup> Any reply must sooner or later centre upon the issue of someone who is not just familiar with the particular work or works of art by that artist, but also someone who, in formulating what artistic intentions are relevant, is wittingly or unwittingly promoting a particular conception of the arts.

A second source of confusion stems from the overlapping of intention and motive. Witness the subtle shift between, say, 'Boito first scripted *Otello* to explore the machinations of evil and to further his personal ambitions' and 'Boito first scripted *Otello* out of a desire to explore the machinations of evil and to further his personal ambitions'. Yet conceptual distinctions do exist.<sup>31</sup> For example, whereas motives have been classified as referring to some reason for action before or accompanying that action, intentions are classifiable by reference to aims or choices pertaining to a future state of affairs. Further, we can act from motives without possessing any concept of the motives involved, thus resulting in the notion of unknown or unconscious motives. By contrast, we cannot act for a purpose without a conception of the purpose involved. To confuse intention and motivation here licenses popular pursuits of such questions as what inspired Verdi to score *Otello* after so many years of operative inactivity. In addition, whilst we can have motives for an intention, we cannot have intentions for a motive because having a particular motive, unlike intending to do something, is not a fully voluntary matter. In any case, no amount of information about intentions as such is sufficient to ascribe what motives were involved. Finally, expressions of intention do not logically function in the manner of statements of motivation. A statement of motives, to be regarded as truthful, must both be meant and believed by the speaker as well as judged according to the facts in question. However, an expression of intention operates differently:

The expression of an intention in the form of a statement about the future is condemned as a lie not on the grounds merely that it is not

30 Wollheim, 'Art and Its Objects', sec. 33, p. 72.

31 See e.g., A. J. P. Kenny, *Action, Emotion and Will*, London, 1963, pp. 84-98, 216-21; G. E. M. Anscombe, *Intention*, 2nd edn, Oxford, 1963, esp. Sec. 12-16, pp. 18-25; and H. P. Grice, 'Intention and Uncertainty', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 57 (23 June 1971), pp. 263-79.

fulfilled ... nor ... because the utterer does not expect it to be fulfilled; but 'only on the grounds that the expression of the intention is not *meant*.'<sup>32</sup>

Having disentangled intentions from motives, we now need to re-align intention and representation in order to avoid the third source of difficulty. At least two steps are needed to re-connect the concepts of intention and representation: one pertaining to the artefact; the other to its audience. Let us begin with the well-known anecdote of how Verdi, in August 1880, proposed to end Act Three of *Otello* with a Turkish assault off stage and Desdemona left alone to pray for Otello's victory.<sup>33</sup> For once, Boito refused to comply on the grounds that it would, amongst other things, dissipate the claustrophobic tension so far accumulated for the last act. In these circumstances, Verdi's proposal may have provided a conclusion for Act Three, but failed to work. That is to say, in Wittgenstein's words,

it does not fulfil its purpose. What is it for it to have this purpose? It might also be said: 'It was the *intention* that this should work as a [finale]'. Whose intention? Here intention as a state of mind entirely disappears from view.

Might it not even be imagined that several people had carried out an intention without any one of them having it?<sup>34</sup>

In this way, we might continue, a collaborative work of theatre as much as a corporate body of managers may have an intention that no one individual has. Indeed, it might be added, can an artefact, even of the non-collaborative variety, be analogously classified as intentional in that it is 'of' or 'about' something? To remove intentionality from an artefact is to invite immediate repercussions, especially upon the comprehension of its audience. To cite Wittgenstein again:

when we intend, we are surrounded by our intention's *pictures*, and we are inside them. But when we step outside intention, they are mere patches on a canvas, without life and of no interest to us. When we intend, we exist in the space of intention, among the pictures...of intention, as well as with real things.<sup>35</sup>

Even if we accepted without dissension the intentionality of artefacts (as somewhat picturesquely sketched above), it still leaves us the final task of explicitly pinpointing the link between intention and

32 Kenny, p. 219.

33 See Julian Budden, *The Operas of Verdi*, London, 1981, vol.3, pp. 306-309 for details and letters regarding the proposed *concertato finale*.

34 Wittgenstein, *Zettel*, sec. 48, p. 10.

35 Wittgenstein, *Zettel*, sec. 233, p. 42.

representation where representation, we would argue, is at least in part analysable in terms of aspect perception or 'seeing something as something else'. Granted it seems impossible, as Wollheim contends,<sup>36</sup> to conceive of any author or composer forming an intention to represent something unless he could also anticipate how his artefact (or the part said to do the representing) would appear. Perhaps we could counter this claim with admittedly controversial cases of children's scribbled 'representations'.<sup>37</sup> But be that as it may, I would rather maintain that the link between intention and representation centres upon aspects being intentional objects.<sup>38</sup> However, Wittgenstein warns us against blindly assimilating what it is to perceive an object with what it is to perceive an aspect: 'an aspect is not the property of the object, but an internal relation between it and other objects' or an 'echo of a thought in sight'.<sup>39</sup> In other words, the seeing or perceiving of aspects lies at the intersection of the sensory and the intellectual, the experiential and the interpretive; thereby highlighting its irreducibility 'either to a purely sensory or to a purely intellectual paradigm'.<sup>40</sup>

Let us finally elaborate a little upon the intentional status of aspects by taking a brief look at Wollheim's opposing, but dubious, 'aspect perception' thesis that representation is not a 'seeing as', but a 'seeing in', a 'seeing something else in something'. Here, the temptation arises to ask whether or not the description under which an aspect falls is in some sense 'in' the artefact without being identical

36 Wollheim, 'Art and Its Objects', sec. 13, p. 20.

37 Cf., e.g., the 'faces' in Howard Gardner, *Artful Scribbles*, London, 1980, fig. 45-48, p. 36 or the discussion in L. S. Vygotsky, 'The Prehistory of Written Language' (1935) in *Mind in Society*, eds Michael Cole *et al.*, Cambridge, 1978, pp. 112-14. The controversy in this area centres upon the issue of whether or not infants are capable of intentions, beliefs, and language, as pointedly raised throughout D. W. Hamlyn, *Experience and the Growth of Understanding*, London, 1978. More pertinently, of course, in asking what counts as a representation here, Wollheim amongst others would concede that intention is necessary, but not sufficient, for representation.

38 See R. V. Scruton, *Art and Imagination*, rev. edn, London, 1982, p. 108 who, following Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, classifies 'seeing as' partly in terms of 'unasserted' thought by virtue of its intentionality, immediacy of knowledge, verbalisable attributions, and subjection to the will; four features also surveyed by Budd, pp. 77-99.

39 Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, part 2, sec. 11, p. 212 ('internal' being understood here as 'conceptual' and 'other objects' as 'intentional objects', e.g., thoughts and images).

40 Budd, p. 99.

with that artefact or any part of it. In other words, Wollheim's thesis leads us towards the suggestion that perhaps the aspect itself somehow conveys or transmits properties. But, as Scruton has pointedly raised in another context,<sup>41</sup> how do we identify that to which the putative properties of aspects are attributed? Even on Wollheim's own reckoning,<sup>42</sup> the identifying criteria are impossible to specify. Does this state of affairs therefore return aspect perception (or 'seeing as') to description or classification in terms, no longer of properties and objects, but solely of experiences and interpretations? It does, but surely an affirmative answer from Wollheim must be qualified. Take, for example, the way in which his hypothesis that we perceive aspects 'in' artefacts ultimately reveals its derivative nature (even when limiting ourselves to instances of visual representation). At the end of Act Three of *Otello*, we see Jago standing over the prostrate Otello as, say, malignantly triumphant whereas Wollheim would contend that instead we see malignant triumph in Jago's stance. What exactly is this stance but a piece of stage business or choreography by the singer enacting the role of Jago? In that case, Wollheim's claim that we see the aspect of malignant triumph in Jago's stance presupposes that we have already understood or interpreted the sequence of stage business as malignant triumph. Expressed differently, malignant triumph is not seen in a stance, a gesture, or a leer until it is already seen as a piece of (musical) theatre, otherwise we would come far too close to ignoring the fundamental distinction between the medium of representation and the object represented.

In sum, the first part of this paper has found Searle's radically 'internalised' approach to intention and definition of representation rather wanting, if not incomplete, in many crucial details. Neither his complex stipulations nor his underlying circularity gives us adequate grounds for dismissing an 'external' account of the two concepts under examination and their connections. The second part has attempted to unravel some key areas of confusion afflicting both concepts. Here, an 'external' perspective, overtly based upon Wittgenstein's later investigations, has enabled us not only to separate

41 Scruton, *Art and Imagination*, pp.53-54.

42 See, e.g., R. A. Wollheim, 'Imagination and Pictorial Understanding', *The Aristotelian Society*, suppl. vol. 60 (1986): p.47 and *Painting as an Art*, Princeton, 1987, pp.46-47.

intention from introspective processes in general and from motivation in particular, but also to re-connect aspect perception (or 'seeing as') with intention when considering representation in the literary-based arts'.<sup>43</sup>

- 43 Discussions in October 1990 with Keith Fleming, John Ozolins, Margo Scheffler and especially Bill Smith of the University of Melbourne helped to shape this paper.

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### St Peter's, Rome

Lord, how they flock together,  
The poor, the halt, and the lame—  
Always, we say unkindly, with us.  
Persistently they circle; they pick their way  
Around incurious crowds,  
Lacklustre eyes cast down  
On the sensible shoes of tourists,  
On the cracks between cobblestones.  
The sightseers enter the sanctuary  
Through portals discoloured as old saints' bones.  
These others, drab as dust,  
Resigned to hope without faith,  
Gather at the bottom of the steps.  
They fluster when approached.  
*Pax vobiscum.* They know what that stands for,  
What kind of handout;  
They've heard it all before.  
Bobbing and hobbling on shocking pink-grey stumps,  
The pigeons throng the piazza,  
Missing their lime-burned feet.

Adrian Mitchell