

Alexander Broadie, ed.
*Thomas Reid on Logic, Rhetoric and
the Fine Arts.*
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The writings in this volume, the fifth in the Edinburgh Edition of Thomas Reid, are drawn primarily from Reid's notes for his advanced 12 noon lecture course. These lectures were delivered annually during his tenure at the University of Glasgow, from 1764, his arrival from Aberdeen, until his retirement from teaching in 1780. This, his 'private' class, was intended to build upon the content of the 'public' class, held at the rather earlier time of 7.30 a.m., which covered the philosophy of mind (resulting in his *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, 1785, and *Essays on the Active Powers of Man*, 1788), ethics, and politics.

On the aims of the advanced course, Reid writes, 'I intend to treat first of the Culture of the Human Mind, both in its intellectual & moral Powers. Secondly of the Connexions which Nature has established between Mind, & Body and of the influence which by the Laws of Nature each has upon the Other. And thirdly I propose to shew that all the fine Arts are grounded upon some of those Connections between Mind and body which Nature hath established; and that the noblest and most important Principles of the Fine Arts must be drawn from the Knowledge of the Human Mind' (22). The discussion of the fine arts will focus on 'the noblest of them, ... Eloquence'.

The volume is divided into three sections of roughly similar length, covering the culture of the mind, logic, and rhetoric and the fine arts. Despite Reid's stated intentions, and aside from some discussion of how character is shaped by causes acting on the body as well as those acting on the mind (see, e.g., 190-3), there is little on the connection between mind and body in the manuscripts included here. It is interesting to note in this context that an earlier volume edited by Peter Kivy, *Thomas Reid's Lectures on the Fine Arts* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff 1973), contains an extended discussion of the relationship between mind and body. Despite the fact that, as Broadie notes, the manuscript on which Kivy's book is based appears to be another's transcription of several of Reid's advanced lectures, it does suggest that Reid might have spent more time on this topic than is suggested by the extant manuscripts (or, at least, those collected here).

In the first of the three sections, Reid focuses on the cultivation of the mind, stating 'the Superiority of Man above the brute Creation, as well as the Superiority of one Man above another and of one Nation or tribe of Men above others is in a great measure owing to Culture' (10). The mind of an infant is not significantly different from that of an animal in terms of its abilities; 'we Receive at first from the hand of Nature onely the Seeds as it were of those Faculties which distinguish us from Brute Animals; ... those Seeds by proper

Culture may grow up so as to produce the Noble fruits of Wisdom & Virtue and every human Excellence' (48-9). Three sources of improvement are identified: nature, society, and education, each facilitating the development of successively nobler or higher powers. The solitary human, the 'wild man', is provided by nature with certain principles that enable him to develop acute senses, agility, endurance, and attentiveness. These principles of human nature — the ability to form habits, the drive towards constant activity, curiosity, and the tendency to form beliefs about the future based on past experience — will not, however, enable the acquisition of language, rational powers, religion, any notion of morality or duty, or 'any enjoyment but that of gratifying the cravings of his natural Appetites' (42). Human society is required for these. The opportunity in this context to challenge Rousseau's account of life in the state of nature is not overlooked by Reid (42-5).

The improvement of the mind was central to Reid's conception of the purpose of education. Education should prepare one for life beyond the university class; 'the purpose of Education in the Liberal Arts and Sciences' is 'to acquire those Qualifications that may fit [the student] to pass through Life with honour ... and with advantage to your Country & to Mankind' (5). More specifically, one's education ought to be directed towards one's expected profession. 'It becomes every man's concern to apply chiefly to those parts of knowledge and Learning that are most necessary for the particular Station and profession in which he is to appear' (7).

Reid's understanding of his own role as a teacher comes out in the extent to which the manuscripts collected in the remaining two sections take this point on board. Before turning to these, it is worth commenting briefly on the Introduction. Reid's lectures display a thorough familiarity with both classical and contemporary writings on rhetoric and logic; given this, the excellent account of the historical background to Reid's work in these areas that constitutes the largest part of Broadie's Introduction is to be warmly welcomed.

Reid's understanding of logic is wider than the modern idea of the subject, and encompasses all means of acquiring truth. So, for example, in the context of a discussion of logic we find him attempting to 'enumerate the various kinds of natural & original Judgments we form & reduce them to certain Classes' — this towards the very practical aim of 'the improvement of our rational Powers' (165). As Broadie notes, there is much common ground between Reid's writings on the mind and his study of logic.

For Reid, eloquence, the noblest of the fine arts, is excellence in communicating, or 'the Art of Speaking so as to answer the intention of the Speaker' (238). It is not mere 'Rhetorical Invention', 'the faculty of perceiving what is fit to persuade' (204), as Aristotle had it. All speech is merely a means to an end; whatever the end of the discourse might be in the particular case, 'its Excellence must consist solely in its propriety and fitness to answer this end' (205). Reid's comments on Rhetoric thus apply to all use of language, including that falling within mathematics and the sciences. His belief that education should be concerned with the student's intended profession, as well

as his conception of his own responsibilities as a teacher, can be seen clearly in his extended treatment of the 'Eloquence of the Pulpit' (240-50), a profession with which Reid himself was, of course, most familiar.

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