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THE HUMANITIES AND THEIR ROLE IN MODERN CULTURE [1939]*

The humanities are now passing through a critical period, which has already lasted for some time. This crisis was most vividly manifested during the World War; it may, in its broadest outlines, be characterized in the following way:

Modern European culture does not give man such knowledge and spiritual strength as he needs in order to master his own material power, as a result of which his material power gains the ascendancy over him, becomes inimical to him, and even threatens his destruction. The material power now enjoyed by a person of culture is a result of the magnificent development of the sciences, chiefly naturalistic and technical, during the XIXth and XXth centuries. The development of the humanities was not during this period attended with the same success. The humanities are now faced with the task of achieving the same development, in their appropriate field, as have the natural sciences. In other words, the humanities should give man a spiritual knowledge and a moral strength, comparable to his material power.

How great is the desire for an unshaken morality, based on profound metaphysical knowledge, how much the whole cultural world of to-day needs such a morality, is evidenced, amongst others, by the circumstance that during recent times problems which belong fundamentally to the humanities, and to which the latter owe their very existence, have become the object of study of the natural sciences. Thus theoretical physics, now occupying a foremost place amongst the natural sciences, has concentrated its attention on the problem of determinism and indeterminism, which is one of the basic problems of the humanities, and of ethics in general. Perhaps the boldest of living metaphysicists, John Driesch, the author of *Wirklichkeitslehre, ein metaphysischer Versuch*¹ found the chief source of knowledge of human reality in biology.

Such trends threaten the very existence of the humanities, as such, and the view is now often heard that these are superfluous. The extreme opponents of the humanities even tend to seek the chief cause of modern cultural shortcomings in the very fact of the continued survival of the so-called humanities,

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¹ Leipzig 1917, 3rd edition 1930.

which they suspect of demoralizing human thought by their subjectivism, from which they are unable to free themselves; the object of the humanities could better be achieved with the aid of the natural sciences, allied with mathematics and logic and logistics, i. e., by so-called exact sciences.

This view is justified insofar as the humanities have for many years been prosecuted in an undoubtedly erroneous manner. Yet it does not hence follow that the humanities, as such, are actually superfluous, or that their role could really be better performed by the natural sciences. It must be admitted that the great majority of modern humanistic publications are distinguished by a meticulous and superficial factual erudition, but the reason for this is that the humanities have, under the influence of the natural sciences, adopted the *objectivism* of these sciences, instead of developing the creative subjectivism which is methodically characteristic of the humanities. This objectivism has been the cause of the abandonment by the humanities of their most fundamental problems, in favour of subsidiary ones. This is particularly clear in the case of history, in which typological researches have superseded investigations of the *conditions of existence and action of creative individuals*.

That the humanities are not superfluous is shown, amongst others, by the circumstance that new humanistic sciences are constantly arising. These have their echo or parallel in the natural sciences, an example of which is given by modern characterology. The beginnings of characterology may be traced to Greek philosophy, to the works of Plato, Aristotle, and Theophrastus, but it was only in modern times that Ludwig Klages, in his works *Prinzipien der Charakterologie*¹, and *Ausdrucksbewegung und Gestaltungskraft*² succeeded in elevating characterology to the status of an independent science with its own subject matter treating of the ways in which the spirit is expressed in the body and the movements of men, i. e. the problem of expressivity in general. It was not until 1921 that Ernst Kretschmer in his *Körperbau und Charakter*³ distinguished three anatomical or constitutional types of man – the leptosomic, athletic, and pyknic types – together with their psychological characteristics⁴.

The origins of the modern science of *constitutions* are as remote, and the history of its development as instructive, as in the case of modern characterology. In distinction to the French school (Sigaud, MacAuliffe), with its four types, Kretschmer distinguishes only the above-cited three types, and considers them not to be products of environmental influences, but to be *primary*, *hereditary*, and *decisive* factors, governing the reactions of men to extrinsic influences. The body and the soul are one, the body being comparable to a substance, and the soul to an attribute. Kretschmer examines human individuals so understood from a naturalistic, purely empirical view point, and generalizes their characteristics as the three above-enumerated *psycho-somatic*

¹ Leipzig 1910; the 8th edition, entitled *Die Grundlagen der Charakterkunde*, appeared in 1936.

² Leipzig 1913; the 5th edition, entitled *Grundlegung der Wissenschaft vom Ausdruck* appeared in 1936.

³ Berlin, 12th edition, 1936.

⁴ The psychological traits of the athletic type were finally defined in E. Kretschmer and W. Enke's book, *Die Persönlichkeit der Athletiker*, Leipzig 1936.

types. Klages also considers human individuals as a unity of body and soul, but for him the body is the sensory manifestation (*Erscheinung*) of the soul, which is the mental essence (*Sinn*) of the living body. Klages attempts to study the individuality or personality of an individual soul from its manifestations, viz., from the body constitution, reflexes, gestures, words and actions, and from the synthesis of all these phenomena, on the assumption that all external traits express internal ones. The similarity of the phenomena in different human personalities allows of the creation of an empirical typology of the components of the latter, and it will be seen that the more numerous and special are these types, the greater will be the number of features of personality included in them. Yet the *whole personality* can never be comprehended by them. Each person will appear finally as a complex of known types, to which some residual element must be added, in order to express an actual given personality. This element constitutes, as it were, the nucleus of personality. It cannot be compared with anything else, nor can it be comprehended by the intellect, or *understood*, for it is a formless, pure idea, and only that which has a certain shape may be understood in the same way as we understand the sound of a word; we must reproduce it within ourselves by our own effort of feeling and volition, and only then can we attain its complete, and not merely intellectual, cognition.

It is our opinion that the humanities should not abstain from making such an effort, since by their very nature they tend rather to a complete, or to an individual, not only external, but also inner, cognition, in the same way as the natural sciences tend to achieve an exclusively intellectual, external, and general knowledge, based on mutually comparable data. From a naturalistic point of view, Kretschmer achieved his object in establishing his three human types, but such an intellectual end is not the aim of *complete cognition*, which is characteristic of the humanistic standpoint. Klages' typology is tentative; it only indicates the necessity of making a further step, or rather plunge, into the realm of creative will and sentiments, recognizable only subjectively and intuitively.

Of course, both tendencies are necessary and rational, so that neither the natural nor the humanistic sciences are superfluous – they mutually complement and support each other. The humanities, however, influenced by the rapid development of the natural sciences, began to adopt their objectivism, depending on maximum elimination of emotional elements from the act of cognition. In other words, the humanities began to confine their efforts to intellectual cognition, and to evade the responsibility of penetrating creatively into individual reality, as a result of which they ceased to fulfil their most vital purposes, and entered into stagnation, in spite of the appearance of progress.

It should be emphasized that even the natural and justified objectivism of the natural sciences is not absolute, but is only of high concentration, if such an expression might be used, for absolute objectivism does not exist in the world of human consciousness. Furthermore, the humanities cannot repudiate subjectivism, which is of such importance to them, is so intimately bound up with their most fundamental problems, and which affords the only way to the solution of these problems. These remarks should not be taken as being in any

way deprecatory to the intellect. The intellect is a *basal* component of cognition, which is under *the special care of the natural sciences, as might on biological grounds be expected*. The highest volitional and emotional sphere of individual cognition is, or at least should be, similarly a charge of the humanities.

It may be doubted whether the humanities alone could ever have so developed the human intellect, without which they cannot dispense, as have the natural sciences. In view of this, and of the fundamental significance of the intellect for *complete cognition*, the humanities must also perfect their specific volitional–emotional subjectivism, since their methodically undeveloped, and yet indispensable subjectivism inevitably exposes them to the danger of arbitrary, anti–intellectual, and anti–scientific speculation. On the other hand, the exclusive practice of *objectivism* diverts them from their proper orbit, converting them into natural sciences futilely aspiring to be humanistic ones, as is exemplified by the fate of behaviourism.

The behaviourists reject the concept of consciousness, since they think that conclusions as to the existence of consciousness in others are based only on uncertain, and in this case excessively hazardous, analogies. They therefore confine themselves in the study of living organisms exclusively to their *behaviour*, which they consider to be determined (completely) by the organic structure of these beings, and by the given situation. They establish laws, allowing of the prediction of behaviour, and, finally, considering themselves to be human psychologists, although they do not believe in a soul, and although they study chiefly animals, they spare no efforts to elaborate strictly scientific ethics and sociology.

Attention is being increasingly often drawn within recent times to the circumstance that the humanistic (or spiritual¹) sciences are tending to the creation of a great new synthetic science of humanity, or of so–called culture, whilst the natural sciences tend to create a great new synthetic science of nature, or of so–called energy, and that these two new sciences should in the future be reduced to a common denominator of life–culture; they would then afford a firm basis for a new philosophy, which would unite science and religion, and art and ethics, into one harmonious whole. We may in this connexion cite the views of one of the foremost Polish humanists, Jan Rozwadowski², and we may remind the reader that Ernest Renan, in his early work *L'avenir de la science*³ dreamt of a higher harmony of knowledge–poetry–morality, which was to constitute the philosophical basis of the future natural religion. The truth of such a view is borne out by the fact that the origins of all the sciences, both humanistic and naturalistic, lie in the ancient Hellenic

¹ Cf. W. Dilthey, *Der Aufbau der geschichtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften* in: *Ges. Schr.* VII Bd. Leipzig u. Berlin 1927, pp. 79 sq.

² Cf. *Nauka a życie* [*Science and Life*] in: *Nauka Polska* 3, 1920, pp. 5 sq., *Nauka, religia i sztuka* [*Science, Religion and Art*] in: *Nauka Polska* 4, 1923, pp. 1 sq., *Znaczenie nauki o języku* [*Significance of Linguistics*] in: *Język Polski* 8, 1923, pp. 8 sq., *Język a literatura* [*Language and Literature*] in: *Przegląd Współczesny* 14, 1925, pp. 3 sq.

³ Paris 1890, this book was written nearly 40 years earlier.

philosophy; it may hence well be that these sciences will again meet, and unite, to give some great universal philosophy of the future. Yet, even admitting this vision of the future unification of the sciences to be well-founded, the differences between the humanities and the natural sciences should not be overlooked, if only for the reason that we can then the more readily visualize the possibilities of their development within the nearest future, and can bear in mind not only the chief aim of the humanities at the present time, but also the way in which its realization may be inaugurated.

It has been attempted in the foregoing remarks to distinguish between the natural and the humanistic sciences, with regard to their methods of intellectual (external) and complete (external-internal) cognition; we shall now supplement these arguments with some remarks on the subjects and aims of the two groups of learning under discussion, with the reservation that the division of sciences into humanistic and natural ones has, for our thesis, a limiting, rather than a meritorious significance. How difficult it is to achieve a classification of sciences on their intrinsic merits is shown in the work of the Polish philosopher Władysław Kozłowski, entitled *Klasyfikacja umiejętności* [*Classification of Knowledge*]¹. In this connexion we would mention that another Polish philosopher Henryk Struve, in his *Wstęp krytyczny do filozofii* [*Critical Introduction to Philosophy*]² points out the fundamental unity of science, and ascribes its subdivision into the diverse individual sciences to the feebleness of the human intellect, and to the necessity of the apportionment of mental work. He distinguished the philosophical sciences from the special ones, and subdivides the latter into the natural, the humanistic or anthropologic, and the theological sciences.

The chief subject of the natural sciences is materialized force, force imprisoned, as it were, and acting in a material form – in a word, energy. The natural sciences tend to achieve cognition of the laws of nature. These are laws which, at least in principle, admit of no exceptions; they apply to being, as such, in contradistinction to other laws, such as those of convention, which apply to human possibilities and duties. Natural laws consist of empirical and causal ones. All that happens does so not *as a result* of, but *in conformity with* the laws of nature; no compulsion is implied in them, no power of authority over things, but only the mutual reaction of things themselves on each other. The natural sciences interpret individual phenomena in terms of concepts, such as matter, gravitation, or electricity, which do not need to be probed and known *intimately*, in order for the interpretations to be clear and complete; the description and the mathematical formulation of their phenomenal action suffice. The actual essence of the law of nature is an objective knowledge, based on *a priori* regularity, and on *a posteriori* factuality, of the conditions of formation, duration, and termination of the given phenomena. Man cannot change the laws of nature, and in this sense he is submitted to nature, but he may select and fix the conditions in which these laws act, and in this sense he

¹ Warszawa, 1896; the 3rd edition, entitled *Systemat wiedzy i klasyfikacja nauk* [*System of Knowledge and a Classification of the Sciences*], appeared in 1913.

² Warszawa, 1896, pp. 111 sq.

prevails over nature. Auguste Comte's words come to mind in this connexion, in which he says that *knowledge allows of prediction, and prediction of prevention*, and the suspicion arise whether we should not, in view of the attitude of modern science, invert the well-known saying of Francis Bacon, and say *we know only what we can*. An investigator learns the laws of nature by the aid of detailed objective observation, and accurately formulates them by the mathematical transformation of qualitatively differentiated sensations and sensory images into quantitatively differentiated intellectual conceptions, in an objective way, the validity of which is always and everywhere the same. The specific objectivism of the natural sciences is intimately connected with that non-exceptional character, that validity, and that intellectual attitude, repudiating discriminating volition and personal emotions, which has been termed the attitude of *nobody in particular*. The laws of nature act always and everywhere irrespective of whether man knows them or not, or of the object for which he realizes their objectively valid conditions.

It should also be remembered that the absolute validity of the laws of nature was questioned by XIXth century positivism, from a theoretical-cognitive standpoint, whilst theoretical physics has opposed it from an experimental and mathematical standpoint for the past sixteen years. Thus the laws of nature have always possessed a greater significance for physics and chemistry, for example, than for biology. The indeterminism of modern theoretical physics, which is itself strictly determined, expresses the fundamental fact that intellectual cognition does not exhaust reality; this is not equivalent to the statement that such cognition is worthless. On the contrary, the circumstance that the intellect realizes the limits of its cognizance allows us to have a well-grounded confidence in the discoveries made within these limits, although they are not the ultimate boundaries of human cognition. The indeterminism of modern theoretical physics will probably prepare the way for biology to occupy a foremost place amongst the natural sciences, and will strengthen the position of the humanities, which we shall now proceed to discuss.

The chief subject of the humanities is spiritual power, which is free and creative in the mental faculties of man, before it has yet manifested itself in the consciousness of definite thoughts, words, actions, or other external manifestations. The humanities tend not so much to the cognition of irrefutable laws as to the fathoming of the secrets of human creativity and its ethical aims. The natural sciences begin with facts and their observation, they advance hypotheses, they apply deductive reasoning, and, in the final verification of their hypotheses, they again return to facts and observation. The crux of the matter is the hypothesis, which cannot penetrate into the tenebrous interior of things, but must remain in the illuminated field of the mutual phenomenal reaction on each of the given substrates, and must always be in one way or another an intellectual exponent of this mutuality.

The natural sciences *delimit* phenomena, reducing them, within the limits of the principle of causality, to natural laws. But what is the significance here of this strange principle, according to which a cause always precedes an effect, although it is not a cause until the effect comes into being. The principle of causality can have only significance, in the natural sciences, that an effect is

equivalent to a cause, i. e., the significance of *the principle of conservation of energy*.

We also encounter the concepts of cause and effect in the humanities, but here their relation has again a different significance, viz. that of *the principle of creativity* (known to the Greek philosophers, in particular of the Neo-Platonic school), according to which an effect cannot exist without a cause, but a cause may exist without an effect, and is always greater than the effect.

The problem of observation and hypothesis presents many similarities to the above. In the natural sciences they are both precise, objective, and, as far as possible, purely intellectual. The investigator neglects individual differences, seeking common properties, and constantly broadens the range of his generalizations, to the final elimination of individual perturbations, and it is to these most general, and hence least, controversial, *ontico-static* forms that he adapts his hypothesis, and so earnestly does he strive to free his reasoning from the intrusion of his own personal feelings and desires that not only does he control his observations with the aid of various instruments, but even readily relegates the observation itself to instruments.

In the humanities, inanimate instruments cannot replace the observer. The humanist compares similar phenomena, not, however, with the intention of passing from an individual fact to limiting generalizations, but in order to penetrate into the individual core of the given phenomena. Usually only a relatively small number of phenomena suffices, and they may be comprehended intuitively, the intuitive capacity of the investigator being of great importance in this connexion.

The *hypothesis* of the humanist, as distinguished from the intellectual hypothesis of the naturalist, is of a volitional-emotional nature. Its relation to actual observation corresponds with that, of the effort of creative spiritual power to the formal product created by it. It is obvious that trees cannot be *merry* (the *arbusta laeta* of Lucretius), yet a flowering rose-tree has actually brightened many a sad person. In each sensory object may be found its *specific individual trait*, which we reproduce, if we do so, with an effort of feeling and volition *characteristic of ourselves*. We cannot enter into the feelings of generically different natural objects, animate or inanimate, otherwise than in a human way, such that their individuality becomes a stimulus to our creativity with regard to ourselves. Conditions are entirely different when we have to deal with human beings or their works, in particular with works of art. Each such work, whether it is a picture or a literary or musical creation, comprises an individual human element; by reproducing this element by a creative effort of feeling and volition we may, in principle, achieve its equivalent in our consciousness. In other words, we may achieve not only an outer, but also an inner knowledge of the given work. Humanistic cognition requires the addition to its external and formal, i. e., intellectual, fundamental elements, of the maximum of inner, i. e., emotional-volitional cognition.

This maximum cannot be expressed directly; it is expressed indirectly in the *living truths* of a humanistic work. The content of the form is not the whole content of the work, and the effect is always smaller than the cause. The investigator must possess a sufficiently creative and *rich* individuality, in

order to be able to attain this summit of inner cognition, without which humanistic cognition is barren, no matter how perfect is its intellectual component.

The creative subjectivism of the humanities is characteristic in that their cognition is directed to the individual and kinetic, and not universal and static aspect. It cannot be too emphatically stressed that the objects of the natural sciences are those things the significance of which is primarily universal, whilst in the case of the humanities their significance is above all individual. Thus a person writing of Plato or of Alexander the Great wishes actually to present these personages, and not merely types of philosophers or conquerors.

The humanities, however, began in the latter half of the XIXth century to model themselves on the natural sciences, and without deeper consideration to prosecute the objectiveness of these sciences, with very undesirable results. The view gained acceptance that learned connoisseurs of art can ignore the opinions of artists, since the artists are not, as creators, sufficiently objective, as compared with the critics of artistic creativity, themselves not possessed of creative talent.

In the humanities the bond between theory and practice is dictated by their specific subjectivism; in the natural sciences scientific theories need have no influence on the ethical conduct of their exponents. The triumph of objectivism has damaged the moral foundation of the humanities, which require the conformity of words and actions. Such a conformity is ensured by complete cognition, but by no means by merely intellectual cognition. The external variety of humanistic knowledge, learned, as it were, by rote, has frequently served criminal and dishonest purposes, in discord with its ostensible aims; an example of this is given by forensic learning, and by the skilful frustration of justice practised by lawyers¹. The discrepancy between theory and practice, a contempt for ethics, an emotional snobbery, an admiration for forms, a shallow intellectualism, a lack of appreciation of the beauty of strong human characters, and a certain moral nihilism are characteristic of contemporary humanistics, and of their lack of orientation.

The humanities have an immense influence on man, whence it is not strange that attempts have been made to prevent their submersion in the intellectualism and objectivism of the natural sciences. The defence has, however, frequently been lacking in moderation, and has gone to the opposite extreme. Numerous papers have been published, the authors of which strove sincerely to achieve inner cognition, but they are not sufficiently well grounded intellectually, so that they give the impression of sentimental recitations. Really valuable humanistic works must be based on complete cognition, viz., internal and external, objective and subjective, intellectual and volitional–emotional; such dissertations are only very rarely encountered nowadays. For the moment, the most highly appreciated papers are of the *painstaking*, and of the *moderate–sceptical* types, full of erudition and insignificant details, which can always be supplemented by a further batch of equally trifling details. They

¹ Cf. A. Krokiewicz, *Uwagi o kulturze i cywilizacji starożytnej w związku z kulturą i cywilizacją współczesną* [Observations on Ancient Culture and Civilisation in Connexion with Modern Culture and Civilisation] in: *Muzeum* (Lwów) 47, 1932, pp. 143 sq.

avoid stating definite opinions and decisions, and are devoted to problems of a typological, rather than of an individual nature. They are often of undoubted value, but with regard to the chief object and trend of the natural sciences, for they have only a secondary importance for the chief aim and trend of the humanities.

The position is best illustrated by the case of history, which now leads amongst the humanities, in much the same way as theoretical physics are now at the forefront of the natural sciences. History as now studied is based on *facts* taken from archives, and its aim is to establish so-called historical laws, equivalent to natural ones, and based on as broad generalizations as possible¹. Historical studies are prosecuted chiefly within the confines of typological concepts, such as, for example, the concepts of feudal authority, of monarchical and military states, of parliamentarism, of state and world economics, of colonial cultures, and many others. We wish to make it clear that, while we have not the least intention of deprecating the scientific value of these concepts and studies, yet we are convinced that they overshadow the real aim of the study of history; this is to present individual creative human characters. Further, it is our opinion that the result of treating historical laws in the same way as those of nature is to degrade living persons to the level of inanimate objects.

A partial intellectual objectivism can never replace the virile and creative subjectivism proper to the humanities. The humanities have not, owing to their overestimation of the value of objectivism, and underestimation of that of subjectivism, succeeded in conferring on the cultured individuals of our generation enough of spiritual knowledge and moral strength; they serve rather to give a superficial polish to persons often not possessed of creative talents, and, in giving them diplomas attesting to their humanistic education, they contribute to swelling the multitude of spiritually passive, low-grade members of the intelligentsia.

Closely connected with this, and with the above-enumerated defects of the humanities, are undoubtedly certain ominous contemporary manifestations, such as supineness of character, contempt for the individual, treated as a mechanical unit in the bolshevik and fascist systems, admiration for, and artificial cultivation of the so-called drab masses, represented as being the mainstay of the power of the nation and of the state, and finally, absence of understanding for, and of interest in, the age-old aims of human life, or the cultural creativity of man. This must be counteracted; the question is, how?

In our opinion, the first thing to be done is clearly to demonstrate human creativity in its elementary form, for only then can that most important and most characteristic humanistic principle, viz., the principle of creativity, acquire real significance. The native language of the students of the subject is the most suitable for the purpose. Each of us not only creates so-called *lingual matter* when we speak, but we also readily realize, when this is pointed out to

¹ Cf. K. Breysig, for example: *Der Stufenbau und die Gesetze der Weltgeschichte*, Stuttgart und Berlin 1927, p. 169. On p. 159 Breysig enumerates 35 such laws, governing the *political history of nations*. The problem of historical laws possesses a voluminous literature.

us, that this creativeness involves a tendency towards perfection, which is realized by eminent authors, who shape the language, and together, with it, the thought of their nation. Everyone will readily comprehend that even so common a creative act as is that of speech possesses its sublime aims, which become the inspiration of individuals specially gifted in this direction. We have the impression that the conception of literature as the natural outcome of the striving after lingual perfection might render both modern linguistics and the study of letters more profound.

We should then pass from the great authors to other great personalities, to those who have divined the real aims of human creativity in its diverse domains, and who, thanks to this intuition, themselves became creators. It should, finally, constantly be repeated that the most appropriate task of historical studies, as such, is the investigation of the secrets of individual creative characters. Tacitus worked in this direction, and so is justly considered to have been the greatest historian of antiquity; in our times, the most eminent master of such studies was Thomas Carlyle.

Research into characters requires that the investigator should possess great intuitive powers and creative imagination, a rich individuality, excessive sincerity in his inner efforts and conflicts, profound emotions, and a trained intellect, for the first methodical rule of complete humanistic cognition is that *external intellectual cognition should precede, and, as it were, determine the general direction of inner and creative, volitional-emotional individual cognition*, which might otherwise deviate from its proper direction, and fail to attain its aim. The true humanist must not underestimate intellect, but he should, on the other hand, remember that he must be a creator, above all of his own living personality, and of his own character, in order to fulfil the requirements of scientific humanistic cognition.

We have drawn attention chiefly to the differences between the natural sciences and the humanities. These differences are not such as to exclude the co-operation of these two groups of sciences; on the contrary, they call for it. In order, however, for this co-operation to be real, the humanities must enter into their appointed path, and must free themselves from the overwhelming influence of the natural sciences.

The complete cognition proper to the humanities introduces man into a world of ethics depending on a hierarchy of individuality. Contemporaneous naturalistically understood scientific ethics seeks to determine what is good, and what is bad. From the standpoint of the humanities, the question is rather: On what depends, and of what nature is good or bad, in a human individual? Ethical advancement is accomplished through the efforts of higher individualities, who point out the way of creative action to lower ones. Such a higher individuality is, for example, a nation, with reference to an individual. From a humanistic viewpoint, a nation is not an abstract generalization, but is distinctly animate, and is highly important for the life of an individual, being, as it were, the nearest sign-post on the far road of his individual creativity.

In Italy, and particularly in Germany, a new science of nationality is developing whose subject matter is the knowledge of *nation* with all the meaning of the word *nation* implies; it is still so young that it has not yet

found a name for itself. The first step in the direction of understanding the individuality of nations was made by Giov. Vico (d. 1744) in his work *Principi di una scienza nuova d'intorno alla commune natura delle nazioni*¹ who drew attention to the circumstance that nations arise, attain maturity, and decline, in the same way as do individuals. The present day science of nationality is only taking its first uncertain steps, and has, further, the nature of an instinctive, not sufficiently controlled reaction against the powerful influences which have for long years denationalized individuals, and which have led to the present-day state of ethical barbarism, existing together with an apparently high level of spiritual culture. Against these influences the humanities were unable to defend either individuals or nations.

A contributory cause of this state of affairs is probably an instinctive uneasiness; due to the growing moral power of the East, such as, for example, of Japan. Japan has achieved immense power thanks to its national ethics *Bushi-do*, the so-called *path of chivalry*, and has within the past few years on many occasions moved the conscience of the West, giving it examples of the superhuman heroism of individuals actuated by national individuality. The fact that the science of nationality is as yet only in its initial phases, the nature of the reaction to anti-national tendencies, and the still very considerable intensity of the latter, together with, possibly, a certain fear of the *yellow peril*, have all contributed to bring about the undeniable perversions which the new science of nationality has suffered in Italy, and more particularly in Germany. None the less, this movement constitutes a decisive step in the direction of ethics, leading to the development of the humanities, as a result of which man may find the spiritual knowledge and moral strength necessary to control his present-day material power. Only then will it be possible to speak of real co-operation between the natural sciences and the humanities. It may be that, with time, the biological sciences will lead amongst the natural sciences, and ethics among the humanities; these could then constitute the basis of a universal science of life-culture, the objects of which would be to study the aims of human creativity. This is, however, still a matter of the distant future. At the present moment the humanities must be diverted in the direction of studying human creativity and its ethical aims, by drawing attention to the elementary field of this creativity, viz., national thought and language and by studying the outstanding creative characters of national history. This will undoubtedly contribute to the enhancement of the ethical strength of the community, in default of which material power becomes an acquisition full of menace.



¹ Naples 1725. Of more recent authors, the works of A. Müller (d. 1829), A. Tocqueville (d. 1859), and W. Riehl (d. 1897) are important.