

Semantography (Blissymbolics) Publications

(A Non-Profit Institute)

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Semantography (Blissymbolics) Series No. 198

THE WRITING OF TOMORROW

Reprint of 2 Articles by William De Vere, from the Sydney SUN-HERALD of January 19 and 26, 1964
(See Overleaf)

Introductory Note by C. K. Bliss.

For years, Manufacturers' Mutual Insurance Ltd. has given the Australian public a new kind of advertising: weekly reports about the progress in all sciences. Expertly written in simple language, they give the reader valuable information, enrich his knowledge, and thus makes him interested in the insurance services of the company.

I read all these Progress articles, and I kept a number of them, especially those which told of the heartbreaks of inventors whose work was not recognised and not realised during their life-time (as it happens with my work). I always thought that the insurance company engages a host of university lecturers of the various sciences to write these articles. When progress was reported about alphabet reform, I decided to visit that special university lecturer in linguistics.

To my astonishment I was told that all articles are written by one man only, Mr. William De Vere. When I met him I was even more astonished to find that he has no university training, not even the Leaving Certificate. He told me that he was always interested in science, and he is writing these Progress articles in his capacity as advertising writer of Weston Advertising

Co. Ltd. He is a young man, and it was sheer delight to talk with him, and to see how quickly he grasped the scientific implications of my work.

Mr. De Vere has another distinction for me. Whenever someone decided to write an article for the papers about my work, I tried to explain to him (without any success) that my symbols can be of immediate value to everyone, because they contain a simple symbolic logic, which everyone can learn to use in order to recognise and avoid illogical thoughts (without the need of writing any symbols). But none of those writers took the time and the trouble to study this important aspect of my work, and to show how my symbols can indeed make visible and recognisable any vague, ambiguous and fallacious statement. Mr. De Vere is the first man who showed the newspaper reader how my symbols work for logical thought. I am therefore greatly indebted to Mr. De Vere. In my frequent moods of desperation about the lethargy of the schoolmen, who won't interest themselves in a new and important school subject, these articles help me like a good medicine, and enable me to carry on the fight for a new medium and a new mind mathematics for mankind, which one day will be taught in all schools of the world.

De Vere's articles are reprinted overleaf.

PUBLICATIONS ON SEMANTOGRAPHY (BLISSYMBOLICS)

Inquiries Invited.

SEMANTOGRAPHY by C. K. Bliss, 3 volumes (1946-1949).

UNIFIED SYMBOLISM FOR WORLD UNDERSTANDING IN SCIENCE
by Prof. Oliver L. Reiser (1951-1955)

SYNOPSIS OF SEMANTOGRAPHY by C. K. Bliss (1949)

THE SEMANTOGRAPHY SERIES by C. K. Bliss and other Writers
(over 240 issues, 1946-1964)

SEMANTOGRAPHY AND THE ULTIMATE MEANINGS OF MANKIND
by C. K. Bliss (1954)

IN SEARCH OF A LOGICAL GOD by C. K. Bliss (1958)

A BLISSYMBOLICS PRIMER by C. K. Bliss (1954)

EVERYONE'S NEW SIMPLE LOGIC AND SEMANTICS by C. K. Bliss (1962)

ONE LOGICAL WRITING FOR ONE LOGICAL WORLD by C. K. Bliss (1964)

CARL AND CLAIRE by C. K. Bliss (1964)

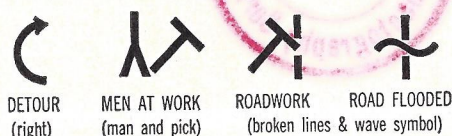
WHY BLISSYMBOLICS FOR SEMANTOGRAPHY?

Because the term Semantography, besides being a tongue-twister, has been often misspelt and misused as a general term by newcomers, who want to improve on Bliss' pioneering work (1942). Hence the additional

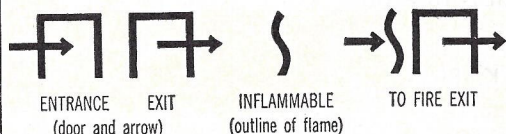
new term Blissymbolics to signify his original Semantography, which contains (what *no other Writing*, alphabetical, pictorial or otherwise, contains) a simple LOGIC, SEMANTICS and ETHICS.

PROGRESS

Samples of pictorial symbols in SEMANTOGRAPHY FOR ROAD SAFETY



SEMANTOGRAPHY FOR PUBLIC SIGNS, ETC.



THE WRITING OF TOMORROW

Towards the close of 1963, this series outlined some of the movements concerned with a reformed alphabet. Coincidentally, the week after the series concluded the Director of Reading Research at the University of London, Mr John Downing, arrived in Sydney to discuss the Initial Training Alphabet system with education authorities. The ITA is a phonetic alphabet as described in the "Progress" articles.

However, it also came to notice as a result of these articles that Sydney has become the home town of the inventor of what might prove to be one of the most useful "alphabets" of them all — an "alphabet" of symbols which can be understood by everyone irrespective of what language they speak.

SEMANTOGRAPHY

The inventor is Mr C. K. Bliss B.Sc., a retired research chemist, and his system is called "Semantography." The science of semantics has been aptly described as the study of the "meaning of meaning," and Mr Bliss has used the term in the name of his writing system because he claims that the method immediately reveals faulty reasoning or meaningless statements.

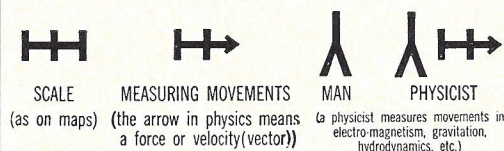
How is it possible that a form of writing could be understood by all people no matter what language they speak? The answer is deceptively simple — by using symbols which like $1 + 2 = 3$, have the same meaning in all languages. In the illustration at the top of this article, examples of Semantography symbols show how they could be put to immediate use on the world's highways, in theatres and for warning and safety signs generally.

The necessary words would be put underneath the symbols in the language of the country — the meanings would be quickly learned and people would readily recognise the symbols when travelling abroad.

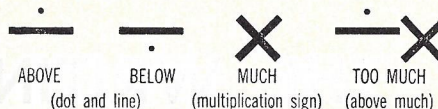
MORE THAN JUST SIGNS

However, the purpose of Semantography is much more comprehensive than expressing simple direction and warnings signs — it is intended to cover every meaning in communication for commerce, industry, and even science. The number of symbol elements required for this comprehensive communication is, according to Mr Bliss, not more than 100. This can be verified by anyone interested by examining the author's main work on the subject — copies have been placed in principal libraries in Australia and overseas countries. When Lord Bertrand Russell visited Australia in 1950, he examined Semantography and wrote: "I think very highly of it the symbols are ingenious and easy to understand, and the whole is capable of being very useful." Mr Bliss has already lectured on Semantography at the Universities of Sydney and New South Wales (Continued next Sunday).

Samples of pictorial symbols in SEMANTOGRAPHY FOR SCIENCE



SEMANTOGRAPHY FOR LOGICAL THOUGHT



Sample arguments: "Shelley stands *above* Shakespeare." On a ladder? No argument. But if literary "superiority" is meant, the argument is hopeless and useless.

"You are talking *too much*!"—"This is not true!" Where is the line drawn in *too (above) much*? And how *much* is *much*? Such haggling with vague words will cease, once semantography is taught in the schools of the world.

THE LANGUAGE BARRIER

Last Sunday's column introduced the subject of "Semantography," a unique pictorial "alphabet" which has been designed by Mr C. K. Bliss, B.Sc., of Sydney, to overcome the barrier of language. It is one of the most remarkable attempts to cope with a problem that is becoming more and more marked in an age in which extensive communication among the peoples of the world is a daily fact of life. Semantography is based on the principle that a written statement like $1+2=3$ can be read by everyone irrespective of what his mother tongue may be. Radio circuit symbols are another example of non-verbal writing.

WRITING WITH PICTORIAL SYMBOLS

In his books on the subject (available in Sydney libraries and abroad), the author demonstrates that with only one hundred symbol elements it is possible to communicate satisfactorily about all the daily affairs of commerce and even the highly specialised communication necessary for scientific subjects. It is maintained that the symbols could be accommodated on a normal size typewriter in addition to the alphabetical letters. International correspondence typed on such a machine would need no translations or decoding upon arrival at its destination.

The illustration at the top of this column shows how Semantography expresses such meaning as "Below," "Above," "Much," "Too much" and so on. Semantography claims a unique distinction from a language point of view. Its author says that it is impossible to write down abstract statements which may appear very meaningful when expressed in words but which in fact have no real meaning at all — or, worse still, very misleading meanings. In other words, Semantography is said to reveal faulty reasoning and purely subjective judgments — the cause of most of mankind's troubles.

FACTS VERSUS OPINIONS

Just as an example, the author quotes the hoary expression "the ship of state is heading for the rocks and needs a strong man at the helm." If this were translated into pictorial symbols it would become immediately evident that absolutely nothing has been said about an actual problem and that in some countries the meaning of "strong" would have to be shown as someone who imprisons all opponents and abolishes all liberties. In the light of this, it can be understood why Lord Bertrand Russell referred to the promulgation of Semantography as "an important service to mankind." The system has also earned the praises of other eminent world authorities, but the vital factor for any proposed international system is official recognition by an international body. A United Nations Committee would be the ideal starting point.

Semantography is one of the most interesting forms of international communication awaiting the opportunity to help the world along the highway of Progress.