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FILOZOFSKI VESTNIK

2/1999 – Supplement

XIVTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF AESTHETICS
XIVÈME CONGRÈS INTERNATIONAL D'ESTHÉTIQUE
XIV. INTERNATIONALER KONGRESS FÜR ÄSTHETIK

»Aesthetics as Philosophy«
«L'Esthétique comme philosophie»
»Ästhetik als Philosophie«

LJUBLJANA 1998

.

PROCEEDINGS
PART II



FILOZOFSKI VESTNIK XX

ISSN 0353-4510
FILOZOFSKI VESTNIK / ACTA PHILOSOPHICA
Volume / Letnik XX, number / številka 2 / 1999
SUPPLEMENT

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*FILOZOFSKI VESTNIK is included in: Arts & Humanities Cit. Index,
Current Contents / Arts & Humanities, Internationale Bibliographie der Zeitschriften,
The Philosopher's Index, Répertoire bibliographique de philosophie, Sociological Abstracts.*

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Filozofski vestnik is a journal of philosophy with an interdisciplinary and international orientation. The Journal is edited by members of the Institute of Philosophy in the Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences & Arts. Editorial correspondence and enquiries, business correspondence and books for review should be addressed to

Filozofski vestnik, ZRC SAZU, P.P. 306, Gosposka 13, 1001 Ljubljana, Slovenia.

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E-Mail: fi@zrc-sazu.si – <http://www.zrc-sazu.si/fi/fi.html>

To order XIV ICA Proceedings: Založba ZRC • ZRC Publishing

p.p. 306, SI-1001 Ljubljana, Slovenia

E-mail: zalozba@zrc-sazu.si; Fax: +386 61 125 52 53

Part II of the *XIVth ICA Proceedings* has been published with a grant from The Ministry of Science and Technology of the Republic of Slovenia.

The Journal is published semi-annually, two issues constitute one volume.

Annual subscription: \$ 18 for individuals, \$ 36 for institutions.

Single issue: \$ 10 for individuals, \$ 20 for institutions. Back issues available.

The price of the *XIV ICA Proceedings* (2 vols.) is \$ 70 (one volume \$ 40).

Access / Master Card / Eurocard and VISA accepted.

Credit card orders must include card number and expiration date.

Filozofski vestnik is published with grants from The Ministry of Science and Technology and The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia.

© Filozofski inštitut ZRC SAZU

Printed in Slovenia by Littera Picta, Ljubljana

FILOZOFSKI VESTNIK

ZNANSTVENORAZISKOVALNI CENTER SAZU
FILOZOFSKI INŠTITUT

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**PROCEEDINGS
PART II
SELECTED PAPERS**

LJUBLJANA 1999

XIVth International Congress of Aesthetics

Sections

- (1) »Aesthetics and Philosophy«
- (2) »Aesthetics and History«
- (3) »Aesthetic Experience«
- (4) »Aesthetics, Critical Theory, Post-Structuralism ...«
- (5) »Feminist Theory and Aesthetics«
- (6) »Aesthetics, Ethics and Environment«
- (7) »Applied Aesthetics«
- (8) »Aesthetics and Philosophy of the Body and the Sensuous«
- (9) »Art, Culture and Aesthetics in the East, the West, the First, the Second and the Third World«
- (10) »Aesthetics and Histories and Theories of Art, Literature, Music, Architecture, Design, Film, Photography, Dance ...«

Conferences

- [1] »Artistic Expression of Cultural Identity«
- [2] »Environmental Aesthetics«
- [3] »La poïétique«
- [4] »Musik als Sprache?«

Edited by Aleš Erjavec, Lev Kreft and Marija Bergamo

(1.1)	Antanas Andrijauskas (Lithuanie), <i>Recherches des principes de l'Esthétique non-classique</i>	9
(1.2)	W. Stephen Croddy (U.S.A.), <i>The Epistemology of Analytic Cubism</i>	15
(1.3)	Pietro Kobau (Italie), <i>Welches Interesse haben wir an einer aufklärerischen Ästhetik?</i>	25
(1.4)	Yacouba Konate (Côte d'Ivoire), <i>Art, Philosophie et Modernité: l'Afrique en Effet</i>	37
(1.5)	Germina Nagat (Roumanie), <i>Description and Explanation in Art Exegesis</i>	49
(1.6)	Ossi Naukkarinen (Finlande), <i>Philosophical Aesthetics and the Aesthetics of Everyday Life</i>	59
(1.7)	Katerina Reed-Tsocha (U.K.), <i>Dividing Lines, Impoverished Domains: The Aesthetic and the Artistic</i>	65
(1.8)	G.W. Trompf (Australie), <i>Post-Modernism as Decadence. On Aesthetics and the Philosophy of History</i>	75
(1.9)	Zhou Laixiang (P.R. Chine), <i>My Harmonious Aesthetics and Philosophy</i>	85
(2.1)	Albert van der Schoot (Pays-Bas), <i>Rational Order in Tone Scales and Cone Scales</i>	91
(3.1)	Christian Allessch (Autriche), <i>Aesthetic Experience – A Topic at the Cross-Roads between Philosophy and Psychology</i>	101

(3.2)	Vaidas Matonis (Lithuania), <i>Artistic Experience as a Construct of Multifaceted Cognitive Sub-Systems</i>	111
(3.3)	Raffaele Milani (Italy), <i>The Aesthetic Exploitation of Landscape</i>	121
(3.4)	Joosik Min (Korea), <i>'Fengliu' the Aesthetic Way of Life in East Asian Culture</i>	131
(3.5)	Christiane Page (France), <i>Une expérience esthétique : Le travail du grotesque dans la formation de l'acteur</i>	141
(3.6)	Simo Säätelä (Finland), <i>Between Intellectualism and 'Somaesthetics'</i>	151
(5.1)	Karin Fry (U.S.A.), <i>Preserving the Subject. Kristeva's Aesthetics in Light of Kant</i>	163
(7.1)	Katya Mandoki (Mexico), <i>The Indispensable Excess of the Aesthetic</i>	173
(8.1)	Gabor Csepregi (Canada), <i>The Clever Body and Aesthetics of Movement</i>	181
(9.1)	Jale Erzen (Turkey), <i>The Plight of Aesthetics and Art Criticism. The Universal Model or Pluralism – What are the Criteria?</i>	191
(9.2)	Giovanna Lelli (Italy), <i>A Typology of Medieval Islamic Poetics. Elements of a Comparative Analysis between Islam and the West</i>	201
(9.3)	Grazia Marchianò (Italy), <i>The Enlarging of the Aesthetic Ecumene through Transcultural Studies</i>	205
(9.4)	Maja Milčinski (Slovenia), <i>The Aesthetics of Decay</i>	213
(9.5)	Evanghélos Moutsopoulos (Grèce), <i>La création musicale comme expérience esthétique</i>	221
(10.1)	Keiji Asanuma (Japon), <i>Sense de la matière</i>	229

(10.2)	Viktor Bychkov (Russland), <i>Ästhetische Prophezeiehungen des russischen Symbolismus</i>	237
(10.3)	Jožef Muhovič (Slovenia), <i>Art↔Aesthetics↔Philosophy</i>	247
(10.4)	Dabney Townsend (U.S.A.), <i>Aesthetics and the Representation of Discovery</i>	259
(10.5)	Richard Woodfield (U.K.), <i>Photography and the Imagination</i>	271
(10.6)	Ernest Ženko (Slovenia), <i>Modern Artist and his Space: László Moholy-Nagy</i>	279
[2.1]	Sven Arntzen (Norway), <i>Natural Beauty, Ethics and Conceptions of Nature</i>	291
[3.1]	Richard Conte (France), <i>Recherche et création</i>	303
[3.2]	Rachida Triki (Tunisie), <i>Esthétique et philosophie des limites : La scène du nommable</i>	317
[4.1]	Dalibor Davidović (Kroatien), <i>Zum Begriff 'System' in der Musikwissenschaft. Beobachtungen einiger pragmatisch ausgerichteten Entwürfe</i>	325
[4.2]	Krzysztof Guzczalski (Polen), <i>Musik is keine Sprache – Argumente Susanne Langers revidiert (und mit Hilfe der Ideen Nelson Goodmans untermauert)</i>	335
[4.3]	Werner Jauk (Österreich), <i>Interaktion – Strukturierung durch kommunizierendes Verhalten</i>	349
[4.4]	Borut Loparnik (Slowenien), <i>Die Kommunikation im Schatten der Unsichtlichkeit. Eine Frage des Expressionismus</i>	361

Antanas Andrijauskas
Recherches des principes de l'«Esthétique non-classique»

Les premiers symptômes de crise de l'esthétique classique occidentale se font sentir dans la conception irrationaliste de Schopenhauer, dans laquelle on constate une limitation du rationalisme des Lumières, ou l'on aperçoit les tendances de la problématique philosophique de l'esthétisme et de l'ontologisme, où l'on soulève le problème du dialogue entre les traditions esthétiques de l'Est et de l'Ouest. En élargissant les traditions irrationalistes, Kierkegaard et Nietzsche, précurseurs de l'«esthétique non-classique», s'engagent dans la voie de la déconstruction des principes basiques de l'esthétique classique. Indépendamment l'un de l'autre, ils cessent de respecter la ligne principale du développement de l'esthétique classique pour orienter la conscience esthétique vers la formulation d'une «esthétique non-classique» dans laquelle la vie humaine, elle-même, est considérée comme art. Ces penseurs dénoncent la limitation de l'appareil des catégories de l'esthétique classique et celle des principes de raisonnement, ils apportent une nouvelle expérience unique de l'«existence» (Kierkegaard) et de la «vie» (Nietzsche). En premier lieu y surgissent l'«ontologie subjective» et l'idée de la disharmonie du monde qui nie l'optimisme des Lumières et annule les liens avec le concept classique de l'harmonie et de la beauté.

Les idées esthétiques de Nietzsche et celles de Kierkegaard, transformées au XX s., ouvrent aujourd'hui une nouvelle «esthétique non-classique», qui se manifeste dans la culture post-europocentriste de métacivilisation; elle sort du cadre imposé par l'esthétique classique occidentale, s'évade de ses stéréotypes de raisonnement et tient à élargir son objet de recherches en y incluant les phénomènes esthétiques chassés vers la périphérie et la marginalisation. De là vient son exceptionnelle attention aux formes non-classiques de raisonnement, de création, d'art d'expérience esthétique, qui se sont cristallisées dans les civilisations traditionnelles orientales, dans les cultures exotiques et marginales.

L'«esthétique non-classique» cherche les points de contact entre les interprétations des problèmes esthétiques basiques, surgis dans les cultures et les civilisations différentes, elle renonce au totalitarisme, au monopole d'une seule vérité, proclame «la transparence» de la raison, le pluralisme de la vision du monde, rejette le rationalisme superflu, la réflexion binaire,

soulève l'idée de coexistence des systèmes différents d'évaluation esthétique et celle du polylogue, se penche sur un style poétique et non-systématique de raisonnement, sur les catégories contextuelles et celles de situation. Elle se caractérise par l'aspiration à franchir les limites qui séparent l'expérience esthétique, la philosophie, l'art, la poétique du quotidien en les rassemblant tous pour former un phénomène esthétique cohérent.

La transition de l'humanité vers une nouvelle étape de métacivilisation marque la conscience esthétique postmoderne dans laquelle interfèrent les idées sur l'esthétique et la philosophie de l'art des civilisations occidentale, indienne, chinoise, japonaise, arabe, ainsi que latino-américaine, africaine et conduit à une réévaluation des ambitions universelles de l'esthétique occidentale classique, ce qui accentue la méditation sur la relation entre les grandes traditions de l'esthétique, leur spécificité et leurs points communs.

Pendant de longues années, dans l'esthétique et la philosophie de l'art occidentales classiques on se fondait sur quelques idées majeures héritées à la fois des traditions esthétiques antiques et occidentales. Cet héritage formait le fondement pour des spéculations abstraites sur l'expérience esthétique et sur des valeurs artistiques universelles considérant comme marginales et non représentatives des catégories esthétiques cristallisées dans d'autres civilisations qui s'écartaient des schémas de la pensée occidentale stéréotypée et rationnelle.

La comparaison des idées nées dans les civilisations indienne, chinoise, japonaise, arabe classique, byzantine et occidentale fait ressortir de certaines tendances dominantes. La tradition occidentale en matière d'esthétique et de philosophie de l'art, fondée sur l'antithèse entre subjectivité et objectivité, met l'accent sur les aspects objectifs et rationnels de la perception esthétique du monde et de l'essence de l'art. D'où ressort l'intérêt pour le monde réel, les faits empiriques et l'analyse, alors que plusieurs textes et penseurs de l'Inde (Natyāśāstra, Gīṭāramkāra, Āṭīśālokaśāstra, Bhāmaha, Vāmana, Ānandaśākhya, Abhinavagupta), de la Chine (Zhong Bing, Wang Wei, Su Shi, Mi Fu, Kuo Hsi, Shi Tao) et du Japon (Ki-no-Tsurayuki, Muroasaki Shikibu, Fujiwara Teika, Zeami, Bashō, Motoori Norinaga) mettaient traditionnellement un accent plus fort sur les méditations esthétiques sur l'unité harmonique de l'homme et de la nature et sur une expérience esthétique très subtile. La tradition esthétique arabe des concepts rationnels (Al Farabi, Ibn Sina) et des concepts intuitifs (Al Ghazali, Ibn Arabi) était plus proche de la tradition esthétique occidentale que de la tradition esthétique de l'Extrême-Orient.

Dans notre ère postmoderne caractérisée par la mondialisation de la culture humaine et la révolution de l'information cette différence entre les

traditions en matière d'esthétique et de philosophie de l'art encourage la concurrence entre elles et nous amène à rechercher des points de contact. La recherche des contours d'une nouvelle théorie universelle «oecuménique» s'impose. Ainsi donc, au point de vue comparative, les traditions de l'esthétique et de la philosophie de l'art nées dans les civilisations différentes peuvent être considérées comme les voies différentes conduisant à la réalisation du même objectif la création d'une esthétique et d'une philosophie de l'art post-eurocentriste qualitativement nouvelle et «non-classique».

L'un des plus importants points de la présente thèse est celui de l'«esthétique non-classique» de l'époque du postmodernisme, dans le contexte plus large de la perspective historique et dans celui de l'analyse de ses traits typologiques: la réflexion, la conception de l'univers, les principes de création, l'échelle des procédés de l'expression artistique; le pôle intellectuel, humaniste, le postmodernisme, sur le plan qualitatif, se présente à nos yeux comme un nouveau phénomène de la culture universelle planétaire, qui diffère principalement des phénomènes précédents. Ses principaux traits typologiques sont les suivants: le renoncement aux points de vue unilatéraux des préceptes de l'art, celui à l'esthétique classique de l'Ouest; le pluralisme des principes, le style multiforme, le fait de soulever une multitude de nouveaux principes de création et de réflexion, empruntés aux autres civilisations; alors qu'une telle vision multiforme du monde était jusqu'alors impossible.

À l'époque du postmodernisme actuel nous sommes témoins d'une des plus importantes fissures dans l'histoire de l'esthétique et de l'art de la civilisation occidentale, fissure qui change radicalement de nombreux principes de la création de l'art européen formés au cours des siècles. Même le regard, le plus superficiel, jeté sur les processus actuels nous fait voir, selon les mots de O. Spengler, les symptômes de la transition de la culture vivante en civilisation technocratique endurcie.

Une question naturelle se pose: l'esthétique et l'art occidental contemporain entrés dans une nouvelle ère d'informatique et des moyens de communication de masse subissent-ils vraiment la crise globale? Nous devons répondre positivement à cette question compliquée si nous restons attachés aux principes classiques occidentaux de l'art et de l'esthétique. Bien qu'il soit difficile de nier une chose si paradoxale – celle des phénomènes qui accompagnent toujours des crises et qui ont pour origine la crise elle-même, qui à son tour, fait sentir et voir les maux de l'être humain, de l'art et de la culture. Néanmoins en analysant le phénomène du postmodernisme nous devrions parler non de la crise de l'art, de l'esthétique et de la culture en général, mais – de la crise des mythes de la culture occidentale classique,

qui, très concrète semblait éternelle et inébranlable ainsi que de l'apparition de nouvelles formes «ouvertes» d'art, de réflexion, et de conception «esthétique non-classique», qui sont fortement influencées par les cultures de l'Est, exotiques et marginales.

Il devient de plus en plus évident qu'au fur et à mesure de se former les principes esthétiques du postmodernisme, atteignent qualitativement un nouveau stade du phénomène postmoderniste, c'est un post-eurocentrisme. En effet, le postmodernisme c'est tout ce qui succède chronologiquement au modernisme, néanmoins ce n'est pas une simple réaction au système de valeurs créé par des maîtres du modernisme et au système des principes de la vision du monde artistique, mais c'est une vraie reconstruction de l'époque, un vrai changement radical des orientations spirituelles des paradigmes de la culture, dont nous n'avons pas encore tout à fait compris la signification.

Donc, les tournants radicaux qui se sont cristallisés dans la culture postmoderniste contemporaine ont une signification historiosophique globale et non locale. Nous sommes témoins de l'autodestruction des idéaux de l'art, de l'esthétique et de la philosophie classique trop rationalisée, qui s'était cristallisée dans la culture occidentale de l'époque moderne. C'est pourquoi les esthéticiens postmodernistes rejettent le langage philosophique traditionnel et rationnel ainsi que tous les systèmes fermés, ils s'orientent vers le style oriental de la réflexion «poétique», vers les catégories esthétiques individuelles, attentives aux situations de l'expérience unique.

Les idéologues du postmodernisme, ayant recours aux idées esthétiques du taoïsme, ch'an, zen, voudraient créer la métaphysique qui n'en est pas une métaphysique universelle, moderne ou autrement dit une «métathéorie», qui jetterait les bases méthodologiques essentielles pour une nouvelle pratique de l'«esthétique non-classique» et de l'art de l'époque postmoderniste.

Elle est ainsi – ironie bizarre du destin – malgré le désir passionné des alliés du postmodernisme de nier le système d'idéaux et de valeurs esthétiques posé par les maîtres du modernisme classique: un nouveau mouvement a repris le caractère dualiste du modernisme. Deux pôles essentiels de l'orientation divergente se dessinent tant dans le postmodernisme que dans le modernisme, dans le cadre desquels se fait voir ce mouvement à plusieurs faces.

On pourrait appeler le premier pôle populaire ou formaliste esotérique, c'est celui où l'on admire la nouveauté d'une forme et d'une idée, la conception en elle-même. Le culte hypertrophié du jeu (au sens général du patrimoine culturel et des «textes») lié aux formalistes et aux besoins pragmatiques de la société de consommation postindustrielle et la

conscience des masses. Ce tournant, ayant des tendances formalistes et superficielles a repris à la popculture la désacralisation de l'art, son orientation vers l'art de grandes masses, vers les phénomènes choquants du kitch, du contexte quotidien qui se trouve souvent bien loin des limites de l'éthique et de l'esthétique classiques. Il s'oriente vers la deuxième face noire de l'«ego» de notre sosie: le même tournant a repris de la contreculture – la tendance aux actes destructifs, à la décanonisation des idéaux de l'esthétique classique, à sa destruction brutale. Les oeuvres des adeptes alliés de cette tendance sont bien influencées par l'«esthétique négative», antiesthétique et par les idées de l'esthétique de déconstruction, ils aspirent à rompre l'attitude traditionnelle de la raison, de l'humanisme, de la spiritualité, du sexe et à faire voir une nouvelle réalité, privée de préjugés stéréotypes. C'est une recherche éternelle du nouveau.

Le tournant populaire du postmodernisme est étroitement lié aux besoins de la culture de masses, de la stratégie du marché de l'art, de la publicité, de l'activité commerciale, des magazines à la mode, des galeries d'art moderne. On peut y voir beaucoup de phénomènes éphémères, spectaculaires. En premier lieu on fixe attention par un emballage brillant, par une forme extérieure au style criant.

Le rapport étroit avec les valeurs commerciales quasiesthétiques impossées par les *mass media*, explique l'apparition des instincts primitifs et de la suggestivité toxicomane, du sentimentalisme, de la pauvreté spirituelle, du pragmatisme dans ce tournant populaire du postmodernisme. Assez souvent on s'y oriente vers les stéréotypes de la réflexion et de la conscience philistine et cela devient un fantôme idéologique menaçant, on cache scrupuleusement l'absence d'idéaux humanistes, de philosophie vivace, d'esthétique, d'art, de vie elle-même, de transcendance.

L'un de ses traits principaux – c'est la disparition de la plénitude de l'être, celle du contact d'un créateur avec le monde réel. C'est une vraie simulation de la réalité, comblée de suggestivité, c'est un univers d'écrans de télé, de virtualité, de mystifications, de fictions, de langage artificiel inauthentique, qui change le rapport de l'homme avec le monde réel. Dans cette aile du postmodernisme qui ignore la réalité, prédominent les tendances féministes et érotiques. Ces dernières cachent une interprétation très forte de la mise en relief de la sexualité féminine, de la transsexualité, des problèmes des minorités sexuelles.

Le deuxième pôle – intellectuel, humaniste. Ses adeptes, grâce à leurs valeurs esthétiques et artistiques, ayant renoncé au tragique de la vision du monde actuel à leurs prédécesseurs modernistes, aspirent à rendre la tradi-

tion locale, nationale et ethnique à l'homme qui réfléchit et qui est terrorisé par la culture de masse et par sa technocratisation agressive.

C'est seulement en nous rendant compte de cette «dualité» de principes dans l'art et dans l'esthétique postmoderniste, de son orientation vers les idéaux divergeants, que nous pouvons comprendre et expliquer la multitude de paradoxes de l'«esthétique non-classique» contemporaine.

W. Stephen Croddy
The Epistemology of Analytic Cubism

I. Introduction

Analytic Cubism was central to the development of twentieth century art. It consists of the paintings Picasso and Braque created between 1908 and 1912. A principal influence of these works was the evolution in their style. Braque's »Viaduct at L'Estaque« of early 1908 commences the development. Picasso's »Ma Jolie« of early 1912 exemplifies its most advanced stage.

Contrasts between these two paintings illustrate five attributes toward which Picasso's and Braque's imagery evolved. They are:

- (1) A minimum degree of realism¹
- (2) Shallow depth
- (3) Fragmented and flattened forms
- (4) Extensive passage
- (5) A reduced palette

My purpose is to explain why the development of Analytic Cubism culminated in these particular features. This account will increase our understanding of what these influential paintings achieved.

I will show that three components of Structural Linguistics can contribute to this explanation and thereby to our understanding. Two are the concepts of »acceptability« and of an »environment« for a sign. Structural Linguistics investigates the environments for the signs of natural language. The third component is the certain manner in which this study develops.

Several critics have proposed that Analytic Cubism is an investigation of the signs for representation.² The above constituents of Structural Lin-

¹ By »realism« I am speaking of the illusionistic depiction of the (supposed) visual appearance of one or more objects.

² Leo Steinberg interprets the paintings to be a »reflective analysis of all known formal devices. The whole inventory of space and body-building devices is up for trial.« [Steinberg (78), p. 126, his emphasis.] Rosalind Krauss takes Picasso and Braque to be investigating the »structure of the sign«. [Krauss, p. 273.] Edward Fry interprets the works to be an analysis of the »grammar of representation«. [Fry, p. 96.] Christine Poggi describes Picasso's approach as »self-consciously structural«. [Poggi, p. 27.] William Rubin finds him to be »exploring sequentially the more remote implications of one evolving language«. [Rubin (89), p. 26.] In contrast to Rubin I am maintaining that it is the exploration of the language that evolves, not the language itself.

guistics provide a more precise description of the type of analysis these commentators suggest.

I will show that specifically it is the environments of the signs that are being investigated. I will argue that the investigation being of this particular type accounts for the five features which characterize the culmination of Analytic Cubism's development.

Furthermore, I will use Structural Linguistics' concept of »acceptability« to establish that the progression of Analytic Cubism's investigation of the environments for the signs of representation is parallel to the progression of Structural Linguistics' investigation of the environments for the signs of natural language. This symmetry is part of the explanation of the five features.

My account of Analytic Cubism's evolution is philosophically relevant not only for aesthetics but also for epistemology. The reason is that we employ signs of representation in our acquisition of knowledge through visual perception. Philosophy's analysis of this process requires a description of the signs' structure. Analytic Cubism's investigation of the signs' environments and thereby of their structure is a significant contribution to this description.

II. Structural Linguistics' Procedure

Structural Linguistics employs a procedure to arrive at an analysis of the structure of a natural language's signs. The procedure proceeds from the fact that a sign occurs as a member of an arrangement of elements. The environments for a sign are those arrangements containing it which the language's fluent speakers consider to be acceptable.³ The structure of a sign is a description of the types of environments for the sign.

Two dimensions of the procedure reveal the manner in which the analysis of a sign's environments develops. The first is that the procedure is designed so that it is applicable to unknown languages. Consequently it begins its investigation with a certain type of environment. It is one which occurs frequently and thereby is easier to discern.⁴ Thus it has a higher degree of acceptability.⁵

³ Chomsky (57), p. 49. Harris, p. 31.

⁴ Nida (62), p. 177, #25.

⁵ Chomsky notes »Obviously, acceptability will be a matter of degree, along various dimensions.« He adds »The more acceptable sentences are those that are more likely to be produced, more easily understood, less clumsy, and in some sense more natural.« [Chomsky (65) pp. 10 and 11]

See Quine's »Progress on Two Fronts« and works referred to for a discussion of the investigation of unfamiliar languages from a philosophical point of view.

The procedure's second dimension is that each sign can occur in an indefinitely large number of types of environments. The set of a sign's possible environments includes not only ones with a higher degree of acceptability, but also those with the lowest degree. In order for Structural Linguistics' analysis to be adequate, it must provide for all of these types.⁶ Thus to insure the accuracy of the investigation, it is necessary that the procedure be applied to a broad spectrum of kinds of environments.⁷ This requires that it study those approximating the lowest degree of acceptability.

The progression of the investigation, therefore, takes a certain direction. As we have noted, it begins with more acceptable environments. Then in order to assure the accuracy of the structural analysis, it includes a wide diversity of types. This requires that it develop toward those environments which approach the limits of acceptability.⁸ Consequently, most environments considered during the advanced stage of the investigation approximate the lowest degree of acceptability. One of the principal questions, then, at this level of the analysis is what are the parameters of acceptability.

In summary, Structural Linguistics' investigation of environments is a certain type: It evolves from the more to the least acceptable. I will argue that Analytic Cubism's evolution is analogous.

Two similarities are notable. One is that Analytic Cubism's investigation also includes environments which have a minimum degree of acceptability. The second is that it is this type of environment which occurs during the investigation's most advanced stage, high Analytic Cubism.⁹

III. Realism

One reason the progressions of the two investigations are analogous is that, like Structural Linguistics, Picasso and Braque employed a crite-

⁶ Chomsky (65), p. 4

⁷ Ibid. Nida (61), p. 145.

⁸ Harris briefly describes how this might be accomplished, which would be during the latter stages of the investigation. See Harris, p. 1.

⁹ A principal difference between the two investigations is that Structural Linguistics' includes a larger variety of highly acceptable environments. In contrast Analytic Cubism's focus, as I will discuss, is on environments with a minimum degree of acceptability.

tion of acceptability.¹⁰ It was that a painting must to some extent be realistic.¹¹

A painting comprises an arrangement of signs. Thus it can be viewed as an environment. Employing this concept from Structural Linguistics, then, we can interpret Picasso's and Braque's requirement to have been that in order for a painting to be acceptable and thus constitute an environment, it is necessary that to some degree it be realistic.

IV. Minimal Realism

This is my thesis: *The paintings of Analytic Cubism constitute an investigation of the environments of the signs for representation.*

We have seen that an investigation of environments progresses from the more acceptable to the least acceptable. Picasso and Braque equated acceptability with realism. Therefore, through the use of concepts from Structural Linguistics my thesis predicts that Analytic Cubism's development will progress from the more realistic to the least realistic.¹² The paintings from 1908 to 1912 demonstrate that this prediction is correct.¹³ Thus my thesis accounts for the first feature which culminated Analytic Cubism's evolution: A minimum degree of realism.

I would like now to discuss the manner in which Picasso and Braque decreased depth in order to diminish realism. This compression of space

¹⁰ In *Semiotics of Visual Language*, Fernande Saint-Martin provides an excellent discussion of the importance of this criterion for establishing the structure of the signs for representation.

¹¹ As Yve-Alain Bois points out, they never go as far as »total pictorial abstraction«. [Bois (92), p. 174] Similarly, Rubin maintains that »Representation is more than a commitment for Picasso, it is an obsession.« [Rubin(89), p. 24] Kahnweiler states »Les peintres cubistes étaient profondément conscients de la mission de l'art plastique qui est de créer - en fait, de recréer, constamment - le monde extérieur des hommes.« [Kahnweiler, p. 4]

¹² I take Bois to have this point in mind when he maintains that Braque and Picasso are »reflecting on the minimal conditions for the readability of pictorial signs«. [Bois(90), p. 82]

¹³ For examples of paintings which exemplify this type of evolution consider Braque, »Viaduct at L'Estaque«, early 1908; Picasso, »Cottage and Trees«, 1908; Picasso, »Reservoir at Horta«, summer 1909; Braque, »Violin and Pitcher«, early 1910; Picasso, »Portrait of Ambroise Vollard«, 1910; Picasso, »Ma Jolie«, 1911/12; and Braque, »Le Portugais«, autumn 1911-early 1912. All are reproduced in *Picasso and Braque: Pioneering Cubism*.

See Hempel, pp. 365-376, for a discussion of the relationship between prediction and explanation.

fragmented and flattened the forms. As a result, compositional unity became central for maintaining some degree of realism. The principal means by which this was achieved was through the use of both types of passage in conjunction with a reduced palette.

V. Decreasing Depth: Flatness and Fragmentation

The perception of a three-dimensional space is the primary illusionistic component of a realistic image. Thus the reduction of depth was the principal method by which Picasso and Braque diminished realism.

It occurred in two respects. One was a decrease in those portions of a figure which occupy depth. The other was a contraction of the space between the ground and the picture plane. Thus neither of these types of spatial reduction occurred laterally, i.e. either vertically or horizontally across the canvas. In fact, with the decrease in depth there was a corresponding increase in the significance of lateral space. We will see that this occurred with Picasso's and Braque's use of one of the types of passage.

In order to appreciate the consequences of their reducing depth, let's consider their approach to realism at the beginning of Analytic Cubism.

Braque's »Viaduct at L'Estaque« from early 1908 is an illustrative example. Here surfaces are oblique to one another and to the viewer. Figures with a sense of amplitude are the result. This approach to the depiction of objects occurs within an inwardly extended space. The consequence is a moderate amount of illusionism.

The investigation then moves toward a minimal degree of realism. The progression occurs by bringing the ground forward. This compresses the space between it and the picture plane. Nevertheless, the number of aspects is maintained. Thus the contraction in depth causes many of the forms to fragment and flattened to a position approximately parallel with the canvas' surface.

During the reduction, most curved shapes became linear. This accounts for the considerable angularity in high Analytic Cubism, the culminating stage. Picasso's »Ma Jolie« from this period exemplifies the resulting type of imagery with its extensive planarity.

VI. Composition Unity

I have been considering Picasso's and Braque's manner of significantly reducing depth with its resulting flatness and fragmentation. This interpre-

tation accounts for these salient features of the type of minimum degree of realism found in works during the advanced stage of the investigation, e.g. Braque's »Le Portugais«, Picasso's »Man with a Violin«, and »Ma Jolie«.

During the progression towards this culminating phase, fragmentation threatened to compromise composition unity and thus realism. Therefore methods for preserving structural coherence became of prime importance. The following analysis of some of Picasso's and Braque's techniques reveals further aspects of the investigation's evolution.

Their methods employed versions of the signs for representation. As discussed in the preceding section, in the shallow space of high Analytic Cubism these signs typically occurred as arrangements of angular segments of shading.

Two of Picasso's and Braque's techniques for maintaining compositional unity involving these signs employed both types of passage. One type integrates the over-all image internally. The other unifies it laterally.¹⁴ Furthermore, achieving both of these kinds of integration motivated the particular hues Picasso and Braque selected and the manner in which they employed them. Thus the use of passage is a reason for the reduction in palette.

One of Picasso and Braque's techniques is applied to interior space. It employs a limited range of moderate hues in representing the principal figure(s). This consistent subdued tonality is presented against a ground of a similar value. Picasso and Braque then employ these diminished shades to integrate their imagery inwardly. The result is one of the types of passage.

As »Le Portugais« illustrates, their method of achieving this kind is to allow intermittently the shade of the ground to show through the figure's image. Similarly, periodically the hue of one plane in the shallow depth occurs on another. Their employing moderate tones in conjunction with this technique enables them to create a subtle modulation that contributes to two types of partial unification: 1) of forms on different planes, and 2) of forms with the ground.

Picasso's and Braque's second type of passage employs modelling. It incorporates their reduced palette as well. Its purpose is to conjoin contiguous forms.

They accomplish this lateral linkage by subtly gradating the shade inside the forms. This decreases their delineation. In addition, their contours are drawn as incomplete allowing them to open onto one another. Picasso's »Portrait of Ambroise Vollard« demonstrates how the resulting elision en-

¹⁴ For an insightful analysis of passage and its significance, see the discussions in Steinberg(79) and Rubin(79).

ables the close-value gradation to progress from one form to the next. This creates a continuous flow of light and space that links the forms together.¹⁵

Note that this kind of passage is neither a horizontal nor a vertical compression of the forms. Hence it does not reduce lateral space. On the other hand, the passage that integrates forms and the ground inwardly creates a more shallow depth.

This consequence of interior integration brings out a paradox of high Analytic Cubism. It is that this type of passage simultaneously both increases and decreases the degree of realism. Its contribution to compositional unity increases realism. Whereas its reduction of depth decreases it. This paradox is a source of the tension found in the paintings.¹⁶

Reconsider the two kinds of passage, which achieve both types of integration: lateral linkage and modulation between planes. The preceding discussion demonstrates that they require a minimum variation in subdued shades. Thus the principal formal procedures Picasso and Braque employed to achieve structural unity are one part of the explanation of their use of a reduced palette. The other is that the employment throughout the canvas of a restricted spectrum of neutral hues contributed further to this coherency.¹⁷

VII. Conclusion

I have given an analysis of the methods by which Picasso and Braque employed both types of passage in conjunction with diminished hues. Their purpose, I proposed, was to maintain structural unity and thereby preserve a degree of realism. I argued for an account of why Analytic Cubism's evolution resulted in extensive passage and a reduced palette as well as a considerable reduction in depth with the resulting flattened and fractured forms. Employing concepts from Structural Linguistics, the explanation of these particular features is that the paintings constitute an investigation of the environments of the signs for representation. The features are the con-

¹⁵ »The handling of space, of light, and the linkage of planes are...central to a definition of Cubism.« Rubin (77), p. 180. The effectiveness of Picasso's and Braque's techniques in achieving the second type of passage is brought out by contrasting them with the process by which contours are formed in visual perception. Cf. Osgood, chapter 6.

¹⁶ »the dramatic tension of...high Analytic Cubism«. Rubin (89), p. 24.

¹⁷ Additional contributions include the rhythmic distribution of light and dark across the canvas and the use of only one subject which is presented iconically, i.e. it is frontal, vertically centralized, and anchored to the base of the canvas. Simplified themes contributed to the unity of the content.

sequence of this investigation's evolution toward a minimum degree of realism.

Two results of my explanation are philosophically relevant. One is that it increases our aesthetic understanding of what the paintings accomplish. The other is that it shows that Picasso's and Braque's investigation of the environments of the signs for representation can contribute to the epistemological analysis of the process by which we acquire knowledge through visual perception.

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Pietro Kobau
*Welches Interesse haben wir an einer
aufklärerischen Ästhetik?*

Heutzutage scheint der Begriff »Ästhetik« zu viele Bedeutungen zu haben: heutzutage versteht die Ästhetik Argumentationen, die sich gar nicht mehr auf das fast-unbegrenzte Wort »Kunst« beziehen, sondern die wegen ihrer Bestrebung zur Vollständigkeit fast-tautologisch zu sein scheinen (man denke nur an die postmodernistischen Ausführungen über die »Ästhetisierung«). Die Ästhetik scheint auf alles hindeuten zu können und an ein Übermaß an Rechtmäßigkeit zu leiden. Selten wird ein Versuch gemacht, jene historischen Begründungen herauszufinden, die die Ästhetik auf so wirkungsvoller Weise – vielleicht sogar zu wirkungsvoll – mitlegitimiert haben.

Wenn diese heutige Situation unbefriedigend ist, wäre es vielleicht angebracht, auf jenen Augenblick zurückzugreifen, der die erste Gelegenheit für diese Disziplin dargestellt hat. Das Moment der Gründung der Ästhetik in den Absichten der *Schulphilosophie* besitzt in der Tat nicht nur den Reiz eines Anfangs (der noch offen für Ausführungsweisen ist, die sich von dem tatsächlich befolgten Weg unterscheiden), sondern auch den zweideutigen Reiz eines Projekts, das möglicherweise jenseits oder sogar gegen seine ursprünglichen Absichten ausgeführt worden ist. Man will also damit folgendes sagen: angenommen, daß sich die Aufklärung je eine Ästhetik wie die gegenwärtige gewünscht habe (die sich mittlerweile wegen deren totalisierenden Bestrebungen in Verlegenheit ist), so hat sie sie aber unter einer bestimmten Bedingung verlangt. Nach den Worten Baumgartens, heißt es also: die Ästhetik bleibt vorwiegend »die Wissenschaft der sinnlichen Erkenntnis«; sie ist ein methodisches Mittel, eine notwendige Ergänzung der Logik. Zudem wird der oft darunter (nicht unbedingt im künstlerischen Sinn) verstandene Begriff der Schönheit nicht von unseren – weder irrationalen, noch ausgleichenden, noch kritischen – Interessen gedacht oder gesteuert.

1. Wohin gehört die Philosophie der Kunst?

Nach langen und mühseligen Vorarbeiten veröffentlicht der Rest Fenner Verlag im Jahre 1845 in London die *Encyclopaedia Metropolitana*. Die

Gründe des Projekts dieses Werks sind im passenden *Treatise on Method* enthalten, das hier gemeinsam Coleridge und einem bestimmten Doktor Stoddard zugeschrieben wird, während in den darauffolgenden Ausgaben allein Coleridges Name erscheint. In Wirklichkeit täuscht die Ausführung dieses enzyklopädischen Projekts seine ursprünglichen Absichten: die Urschrift des *Treatise on Method*, die Coleridge im Jahre 1817 für einen mündlichen und schematischen Bericht für den Verleger der *Encyclopaedia* entworfen hatte, unterscheidet sich von der in der *Encyclopaedia* selbst enthaltenen Ausgabe, insbesondere dort, wo es um die Regulierung der systematischen Struktur des Werks geht.

Der Unterschied ist letzten Endes nur einer, jedoch grundlegend; Coleridge hatte in der Tat eine Dreiteilung vorgesehen, u.z: 1) reine Wissenschaften (die sich auf die »Relation of Law« stützen und sich mit der kantischen Welt der Ideen befassen, die die Vernunft innerhalb der Grammatik, der Logik, der Mathematik, der Ethik, der Metaphysik und der Theologie erkennen kann), 2) angewandte Wissenschaften (die sich auf die »Relation of Theory« stützen, die die Vernunft durch die Beobachtung der Welt der Phänomenen erkennen kann) und 3) schöne Künste (die sich auf die »Relation of Taste« stützen und die als Mittelwelt zwischen den anderen beiden Bereichen dienen). Die *Encyclopaedia* ist stattdessen vorwiegend in eine zweiteilige Struktur aus reinen Wissenschaften und angewandten Wissenschaften gegliedert, und die schönen Künste finden ihren Platz eben unter den letzteren (als angewandte Wissenschaften gelten also Poesie, Malerei, Musik, Bildhauerei, Architektur; beachtlich ist es, daß die Poesie an der Spitze steht und durch die Psychologie eingeführt wird). Es ist deutlich zu erkennen, daß der Unterschied nicht äußerlich ist; dies führt uns direkt zum Problem der Rechtfertigung einer Wissenschaft der Kunst, besonders im Rahmen einer allgemeinen Gnoseologie und Methodologie.

Im Versuch dieser untreuen Wiedergabe des Projekts von Coleridge eine Erklärung zu geben, würde man vorab versucht sein, sie durch die Wandlung des intellektuellen Klimas zu rechtfertigen. Gesagtes Klima – könnte man leicht sagen – übereinstimmte ursprünglich mit der von Kant abgeleiteten Romantik und wandelte sich später in eine wesentlich positivistische Atmosphäre um. Sehr gut zu verstehen ist darum die große Zahl Jener, die sich für diese Erklärung ausgesprochen haben. Abgesehen von unserer Befürchtung bei der Benutzung solcher unhandlichen Begriffe wie »Romantik« und »Positivismus« finden wir jedoch Gründe genug, um eine andere Interpretation zu versuchen. Der Grund ist ganz einfach chronikartig: die untreue Wiedergabe von seiten des Verlegers ist nicht postum gewesen; in anderen Worten, der Verleger hat nicht auf Coleridges Tod und

auf eine Änderung des kulturellen Klimas gewartet. Coleridge hat tatsächlich seine Beziehungen zum Verleger in der Zeitspanne zwischen dem 7 April 1817 (Tag an dem der erste schematische Bericht der *Treatise* stattgefunden hat) und den Dezember des gleichen Jahres abgebrochen; ferner, während Fenner schon im Januar 1818 privat einige vereinzelte Kopien des »neu aufgearbeiteten« Manuskripts veröffentlicht, bringt Coleridge im gleichen Jahr seine eigene – zwar auch »neu« aber nach dem ursprünglichen Ansatz erarbeitete – Version, unter dem Titel *Essays on Method* (nach der neuen Veröffentlichung von *The Friend*).

Diese chronologische Unmittelbarkeit des Streites zwischen Coleridge und Fenner hilft uns zu verstehen, was wirklich geschehen ist. Kurz gefaßt kann man behaupten, daß ab sofort eine rein theoretische Alternative angeboten wurde: einerseits bietet man die Bestimmung der Wissenschaft der Kunst als Teil der offenen Gesamtheit der angewandten Wissenschaften, wobei jede davon eine empirische Rechtfertigung genießt, während die Notwendigkeit eines methodischen (transzendentalen, könnte man auch sagen) Fundaments ausschließlich der geschlossenen und autonomen Gesamtheit der reinen Wissenschaften vorbehalten bleibt. Andererseits steht eine Wissenschaft da, die zur gleichen Zeit spezifisch und allgemein ist, da sie zwischen den reinen und den angewandten Wissenschaften methodisch vermittelt, indem sie sich insbesondere auf die Psychologie bezieht. Gerade darum hätte sich diese zweite Wissenschaftsart eher den Namen von »Ästhetik« verdient, als jene, die technisch beschränkte »Wissenschaft der Kunst«. Es stehen nun zwei Lösungen zur Verfügung, um jene Lage deutlicher zu erläutern, die auf keinen klimatischen Wechsel im Universum der Ideen warten mußte, um zustande zu kommen. Überdies hat das Interesse an dieser Lage nicht ausschließlich historiographische Gründe, da heute das Problem einer methodischen Rechtfertigung der Ästhetik eher beiseite gelegt als befriedigend gelöst zu sein scheint.

Der erste Weg nach einer Lösung wäre auf der Geschichte der Ideen zu beharren – jedoch auf eine synchronische Weise – und das Bild um den Streit zwischen Coleridge und Fenner zusammenzustellen. Zwar wäre dieser Vorgang sehr aufschlußreich, aber auch problematisch, insbesondere was Coleridge betrifft; in der Tat, obwohl er *au fond* ein sehr systematischer Autor ist (und das *Treatise* beweist es), ist er gleichzeitig auch sehr eklektisch in seinen allgemeinen Hinweisen, und daher gerade an jenen Stellen um so unklarer, wo er sich für unser Vorhaben mehr interessant beweist. Bestenfalls würden wir uns also wieder vor der Wahl befinden, die vom Verleger mit der Hilfe von Doktor Stoddard gewaltsam aufgelöst wurde.

Der andere Lösungsweg stützt sich auf einen Anhaltspunkt, der in den ersten Zeilen des *Treatise* beinhaltet ist. An dieser Stelle erläutert Coleridge, daß der Begriff »Enzyklopädie« mittlerweile dermaßen vertraut geworden ist, daß es nicht mehr nötig sei, den Sinn von einem »Kompendium des menschlichen Wissens« zu verdeutlichen; gleichzeitig klagt er jedoch über die Tatsache, daß man nie dazugekommen sei, ein solches Kompendium mit einer methodischen Struktur auszustatten, bzw. daß die wenigen Versuche in diesem Sinne mißlungen sind, weil man nicht genügend über die methodische Prinzipien des Wissens nachgedacht hat. Es handelt sich dabei offenbar um eine solcher typischen Lügen, die stillschweigend von Verlegern und Autoren zusammen ausgedacht werden, um die Aufmerksamkeit des Lesers zu gewinnen, indem man seine Unwissenheit zuerst ausnutzt und später heilt. Heute würde man sie als »trügerische Werbung« bezeichnen. Es ist ja schließlich das Jahr 1817, in dem Hegel in Heidelberg die erste Auflage seiner *Enzyklopädie* zu Lichte bringt, d.h. jenes Werk, das gleichzeitig sowohl der letzte Schrei nach der kantischen methodischen Reform im Bereich der Spekulationen über den philosophischen Systematismus als auch eines der letzten Beispiele von Handbüchern darstellt, die für eine veraltete Disziplin gedacht sind, die noch ihrer propädeutischen Funktion wegen in den deutschen Universitäten gelehrt wird. Auf jedem Fall kann es hin und wieder nützlich sein, solche kleinen harmlosen – oder sogar in bester Absicht gedachten – Lügen nicht hinauszuschieben, so wie es sich manchmal lohnt, eine rhetorische Frage ernst zu nehmen. Und das ist es auch, was wir jetzt versuchen werden, indem wir Coleridges erste (unhaltbare) Behauptung dementieren werden. Wir werden zeitlich rückwärtig handeln, indem wir zumindest die wichtigsten Momente in Betracht nehmen werden, die hinter dem Problem der Anordnung einer Ästhetik, bzw. einer Wissenschaft der Kunst, innerhalb einer methodisch strukturierten Enzyklopädie stehen.

2. Die Ästhetik als Technik

Zahlreiche interessante Dementi von Coleridges Behauptung sind während der Zeit der Aufklärung zu finden, und sollte das Hauptziel der *Encyclopaedia Metropolitana* sein, eine Antwort auf den Empirismus und auf den Skeptizismus der französischen Enzyklopädisten zu geben, desto mehr lohnt es sich, sich der deutschen *Schulphilosophie* zuzuwenden. Aus verschiedenen Gründen sehr interessant finden wir hier in erster Linie die Entscheidung Wolffs, der die Philosophie der Künste innerhalb seines Wissenssystems stellt.

In dem *Discursus praeliminaris de philosophia in genere*, das der *Logica* des Jahres 1728 vorgesetzt wurde (das Werk war schon im Jahre 1713 im Vorwort der *Deutsche Logik* vorweg bekanntgegeben, da der Autor die Absicht hatte, seine Gedanken auch außerhalb Deutschlands zu verbreiten) – in dem *Discursus praeliminaris* also, nachdem Wolff das philosophische Wissen als Kenntnis der Gründe des Seins, bzw. des Geschehens beschreibt, und nachdem er es vom mathematischen und historischen Wissen unterscheidet (obgleich er davon Gebrauch machen wird), legitimiert Wolff sogleich die *Philosophia juris, medicinae, artium* (§ 39). Diese Formulierung werden wir nun näher betrachten.

An erster Stelle, vom Standpunkt des herkömmlichen philosophischen Gemeinsinnes gesehen, scheint Wolffs Rede von Philosophie der Kunst zugleich geeignet und ungeeignet. Geeignet ist sie zwar aus einer rein terminologischen Perspektive, unter der Bedingung aber, daß man Wolffs »Künste« nicht zu eng mit Coleridges – oder der »gegenwärtigen« – »Kunst« vergleicht. Wolff redet nicht von Kunst im Sinne einer aus anthropologischen Gründen bestehenden Entität, und schon gar nicht im Sinne eines außerordentlichen auf dem metaphysischen bzw. antimetaphysischen Horizont aufgestellten Wesens; er benutzt auch nicht das Wort »Kunst« als Sammelname für ein »System der schönen Künste«, oder im Sinne einer »ästhetischen Kunst«, nach der Benennung von Odo Marquard. Er spricht im allgemeinen von *techne* und schließt von diesem Horizont die Frage des Schönen als grundlegend aus. Er zielt also auf die philosophische Angliederung der *Technica*, bzw. der *Technologia* (§ 71); dementsprechend, damit keine Zweifel übrig bleiben, in der Anmerkung bezüglich auf den erwähnten § 39 bringt er das Beispiel der Kunst des Holzhackers an; er führt erst im § 40 sein – in anderen Fällen – sehr geliebtes Beispiel der Architektur an, das sonst irrtümlicherweise an eine Vorliebe für die schönen Künste glauben lassen würde. Daraus kann man schon eine erste wichtige Überlegung erzielen, und zwar, daß es nicht nötig ist, den Anbruch des Positivismus abzuwarten, um der Rechtfertigung einer Philosophie der Kunst zu begegnen, die als Philosophie der (offenen) Gesamtheit der Techniken betrachtet wird, inbegriffen jener, die sich mit der Bearbeitung des Schönen befassen. Es ist kein untreues Verhalten notwendig, wie das eines Verlegers gegenüber der Tiefgründigkeit eines Coleridges; stattdessen genügt schon das Ersuchen nach der Angliederung eines ultratraditionellen Begriffs wie *techne* oder *ars* an die Frage der Methode. Indem Wolff die Methodisierung der verschiedenen Arten vom Wissen verfolgt, anstatt sich an ein Paradigma zu wenden, das die Wissenschaft und die Technik – auf Grund der Anwendungs-Beziehung eines theoretischen bzw. reinen Wissens – voneinander unterscheidet

und zusammen verbindet, wendet sich Wolff an ein psychologisches Muster, das der Schöpfung des künstlichen Wissens recht gibt und dem es gleichgültig ist, ob dieses künstliche Wissen als theoretisch oder als praktisch definierbar ist. In der Tat, stellt Wolff das Problem der Methode in der gleichen Weise wie jenes der Bildung und der Fortbildung der natürlichen Fähigkeiten des Menschen. Im Kapitel »De Dispositionibus naturalibus & Habitibus intellectus«, das der erste Teil der *Psychologia empirica* (1732) schließt, setzt er in diesem Sinne eine Unterscheidung zwischen den natürlichen Fähigkeiten (oder Begabungen) der Seele und deren mit der Übung gewonnenen »Anlagen« fest. Letzere unterscheiden sich wiederum in »Lehren« oder »Künste«, je nachdem sie sich auf theoretischer oder praktischer Weise entwickeln. Wichtig ist aber, daß diese Unterscheidungen keinen ontologischen Unterschied zwischen Natur (die psychologischen Fähigkeiten) und Kunst (das erworbene und methodisierte Wissen) bedeuten. Wolff setzt vielmehr seine Gedanken fort, indem er unterschiedliche psychologische Anlagen mit unterschiedlichen disziplinbezogenen Bereichen in Verbindung bringt. Wir befinden uns hier vor einem argumentativen Muster, auf dem zahlreiche Versuche einer methodischen Reform des Wissenssystems nach Wolffs Beispiel unternommen worden sind; d.h. also daß wir uns vor einer Strategie befinden, die besserungsfähige und disziplinierbare psychologische Fähigkeiten unzertrennlich mit enzyklopädischen Bereichen zusammenknüpft, die geschichtlich schon in (theoretischen oder praktischen) Wissenschaften zusammengestellt werden können, aber auch nicht. Ferner wird gerade in diesem Kontext von Wolff eine erste Verbindung zwischen der Überlegung über das Schöne und der Überlegung über die Gesamtheit der besonderen Künste (immer gleich Techniken) durchgeführt, die das Schöne als Gegenstand haben. Stets in der *Psychologia empirica* gibt es ein weiteres Argument, den »Experten der Künste« gewidmet, worüber nachzudenken ist. Vor allem behauptet Wolff (§ 531), daß solche Experten besser in der Lage seien, die Vollendung eines Werks zu entblößen und zu »messen«, und darum besser in der Lage seien, auch an den Kunstgriffen dieser Werke Genuß zu finden. Die Fähigkeit sich (natürlich und unmittelbar) über ein schönes Werk freuen zu können wächst also im gleichen Schritt mit der (technisch und methodisch vermittelten) Fähigkeit ein schönes Werk herzustellen, da es sich auch hier darum handelt, die Schönheit bewerten zu können. Solche Bewertung steht gleichermaßen an der Basis sowohl vom »Kennen« als auch vom »Handeln«. Man kann also behaupten, daß an der Basis einer »Wolffschen« Ästhetik das Thema des »bewerten können« steht; diese Fähigkeit ist zwiefältig, weil sie gleichzeitig theoretisch und praktisch ist. Da sie ein Wissen ist, stellt sie sich einem *continuum* ent-

lang, das von der unreflektierten Wahrnehmung der Vollendung des Schönes bis hin zur Kenntnis ihrer Gründe (ergo zu einer vollkommen philosophischen Kenntnis) hinüberstreckt. Gerade an dieser Stelle fügen sich dann verschiedene Vollziehungen des gleichen Projekts einer philosophischen Enzyklopädie ein, innerhalb deren auch andere Varianten der Gründung einer Ästhetik stattgefunden haben (man kann hier z.B. an Gottsched, oder an Bodmer und Breitinger denken). Aber erfolgreicher sind gerade jene Versuche gewesen, die, indem sie diese doppelte theoretisch-praktische Gliederung jedes Wissens für offenbar (bzw. allzu offenbar) hielten, das Fundament einer Ästhetik vor allem (wenn nicht sogar ausschließlich) in der theoretischen Seite gesucht haben.

3. Die Ästhetik als Logik

Baumgartens größtes Verdienst liegt – mehr als in seinen spekulativen Leistungen – in seiner gut gelungenen disziplinaren und zugleich didaktischen Reform-Initiative. Als er einundzwanzig Jahre alt war, hatte er schon eine neue Wissenschaft entworfen, die nützlich sein sollte, um den traditionellen Streit zwischen Philosophie und Poesie neu zu schlichten; später, in der Mitte des 17. Jahrhunderts hat er diese Wissenschaft als erster an einer Universität gelehrt; schließlich hat er 1750 ein Handbuch veröffentlicht, das zum ersten Mal den Titel *Aesthetica* trug.

Baumgartens Ästhetik ist zwar sicherlich das Ergebnis einer enzyklopädischen Ausbesserung, die nach einem schon vorgezeichneten Weg entwickelt wurde, doch stützt sich dieses Werk auf einem begriffsmäßigen Vorschlag, der eine zweite Lesung wert ist. Kurz gefaßt, zielte Baumgarten auf eine Lehre des Schönen ab, die im poetischen und überhaupt künstlerischen Bereich anwendbar sein konnte, doch wünschte er sich vor allem – und diesem ersten Zweck dienend – eine Ästhetik, die ein unverzichtbarer Teil der Erkenntnistheorie sein sollte. Er dachte an eine Wissenschaft, die die Art und Weise durchforschte, durch die unsere Sinne die Dinge zur Kenntnis nehmen und durch die diese Kenntnis zur Vollendung geführt werden kann. Später folgten dann – bei anderen mehr oder weniger von ihm abhängigen Autoren – die Wissenschaft des Geschmacks, der Gefühle...

Weit entfernt bleibt also die Philosophie der Kunst im Sinne Wolffs, und das hat zwei Gründe: weil Baumgartens Ästhetik weder der Kunst als Art der Technik noch dem Thema der Schönheit als ein – innerhalb der allgemeinen Technologie – der Kunst umschreibendes Thema angewendet werden kann. Um diese Stelle besser betrachten zu können, müssen wir einen weite-

ren Aspekt der Struktur der Wolffschen Enzyklopädie analysieren. In der Tat muß Baumgarten für entscheidend empfunden haben, daß ein in der Überlieferung als ontologisch betrachtetes Problem (d.h. das Thema der »Vollendung« der Dinge, von der die Schönheit eine Art ist) bei Wolff rechtmäßig Platz in einer Psychologie findet. Wolff befaßt sich in diesem Kontext mit der Schönheit, indem er sich vor allem auf unsere Neigung ihr gegenüber konzentriert, und das auf eine Weise, die man fast phänomenologisch bezeichnen könnte. Daraus geht folglich hervor, daß das Vergnügen, das man vor der Vollendung empfinden kann, nicht unbedingt von einem auf bewußter und korrekter Weise argumentierten Urteil vermittelt werden muß. In der Tat (*Psychologia empirica* § 510), wenn man die bewiesene Vollendung bezüglich auf ein Objekt als »wahre Vollendung« betiteln kann, ist es dann gestattet bei jeder Schönheit, die wir – möglicherweise wegen eines unbewußten Fehlers – irgend einem Objekt zuschreiben, von »scheinbarer Vollendung« zu reden. Es folgt somit (§ 511), daß der Genuß eine intuitive Erkenntnis einer sowohl wahren als auch anscheinender Vollendung ist.

Wichtig scheint hier insofern zu sein, daß Baumgarten in seiner Gründung der Ästhetik ganz und gar auf die Entwicklung eines Paradigmas verzichtet, das zwischen der phänomenologischen (bzw. gnoseologischen) und der ontologischen Ebene (nach dem »Anscheinend/Wahr«-Paradigma) vermittelt, und sich stattdessen eines rein erkenntnistheoretischen Paradigma bedient. In den *Meditationes de nonnullis ad poema pertinentibus* (1735) erkennen wir tatsächlich eine Umschreibung der wichtigsten Kenntnisse der klassischen Poetik, doch liegt der von den *Meditationes* bis zu der *Aesthetica* fast unberührt durchlaufende und entscheidende Bestandteil in der engen Entsprechung zweier (die eine gnoseologische, die andere disziplinbezogene) Entgegensetzungen: »Sinn vs Verstand« und »Poesie vs Philosophie«. Wenn man den allgemeinen methodischen Wert der *Meditationes* betrachtet, müßte also die in den ersten Absätzen vorgeschlagene Lösung stark auffallen; sie sieht nicht nur die Erwerbung des traditionellen poetischen Wissens für den Philosophie-Bereich sondern auch die notwendige Gründung einer Ästhetik innerhalb der Erkenntnistheorie vor. In anderen Worten, noch wichtiger als die Methodisierung der Poetik gilt die Tatsache, daß Baumgarten dessen Objekte thematisiert und bestimmt, indem er sie in den von den poetischen Werken bedeuteten »sinnlichen Vorstellungen« auffindet – zusammen mit ihrer besonderen »Vollendung« (die »extensive Klarheit«). Im Bezug auf den Erkenntniswert besagter Vorstellungen beteuert Baumgarten wieder mit einer Leibnizschen Terminologie die aristotelische These, nach der es nicht möglich wäre, ohne Bilder denken zu können: der Mensch besitze insofern kein – egal wie stark formalisiertes – Wissen, das an keiner Stel-

le eine »verworrene Erkenntnis« bzw. irgendeine »sinnliche Idee« einschließt. Eine als unvermeidbare Grenze postulierte (psychologische, anthropologische) Sachlage wird demzufolge das Fundament für die (logische, methodische) Erläuterung des Objekts der »sinnlichen Rede« (§ 7), d.h. jener Rede, die sich grundsätzlich nach der sinnlichen Erkenntnis orientiert. Je größer ist die Zahl der sinnlichen Elemente in einem Diskurs, und desto vollendeter ist die dadurch intendierte sinnliche Erkenntnis (§ 8).

In den letzten drei Absätzen der *Meditationes* spitzt sich die Situation sogar zu: die traditionell konfliktgeladene Beziehung zwischen Philosophie und Poetik (oder Rhetorik) wird zu einer der Philosophie internen Problematik, zu einer (methodisch regulierbaren) Beziehung zwischen zwei philosophischen Disziplinen: die Ästhetik und die Logik. Baumgarten schlägt dementsprechend die Ergänzung der »Logik« – im ihren traditionellen und allgemeinen Sinne – mit einer Ästhetik vor (§ 115), damit auch der Bereich der von den Sinnen versorgten Erkenntnis darin miteinbezogen wird. Nachdem er sich für die Nützlichkeit gesagter Ergänzung ausgesprochen hat, schlägt er ferner vor, dabei die Psychologie methodisch zu verwenden; nur wenn man sich hauptsächlich auf diesem Fundament stützt (§ 116), kann man sich erfolgreich in der Erkenntnistheorie auf die klassische Unterscheidung zwischen *aistheta* und *noeta* berufen.

Doch, auch wenn wir diesen Vorschlag einer völlig methodischen (und sogar extrem gnoseologischen) Gründung der Ästhetik annehmen möchten, bleibt ein Problem ungelöst. Auf dem Kantianismus und auf die Phänomenologie beruhend würden wir in der Tat jeden Vorschlag für unannehmbar halten, der die Stützung einer exakten Methode auf eine (immer empirische) Psychologie beabsichtigt. Ferner scheint diese Gründung an einem Zirkularitätsfehler zu leiden: die (in der Absicht) gründende (und förmlich universale) Methode stützt sich hier auf einem positiven Lehrkern (d.h. auf eine Gnoseologie wie die Leibnizsche, die sich auf dem Lehrsatz der Kontinuität der Wahrheitsgraden beruht). Gerade diesen Fehler, der das ganze Wolffsche System betrifft, scheint Kant zu unterstreichen, als er in seiner ersten *Kritik* (»Vorwort«) deutlich zwischen der positiven Wirkung von Wolffs formalen Methode und dessen Dogmatismus unterscheidet – wobei er in der Tat auf die Unterscheidung zwischen empirischen und transzendentalen Methoden achtgibt.

4. Die Psychologie verfügt über eine Methode

Um den disziplinaren Sinn der »philosophia instrumentalis« – die Gesamtheit der Instrumente des Verstands, die systematische Sammlung der Erkenntnisvorschriften – leichter verstehen zu können, wo sich nach der *Schulphilosophie* sowohl die Ästhetik als auch die Logik aufstellen, müßte man sich fragen, warum sich das Wolffianismus so unbedarfterweise der Beschuldigung ausgesetzt habe, es hätte eine Art von »Psychologisierung der Logik« durchgeführt – nach dem berühmten vom Idealismus geprägten Ausdruck. In der Tat zielt die *Schulphilosophie* nicht auf die Bildung einer »reinen« Logik ab, die frei von pragmatischen Absichten bzw. anthropologischen Themen ist; sie konzentriert sich vielmehr immer auf die Vervollkommenung der tatsächlichen Benutzung jener Techniken, die für die Entdeckung und die Bewertung der positiven Wahrheiten nützlich sind. Ihr Ziel ist geradezu der optimale Ablauf von Beobachtungs-/Versuchs- und Gesprächsverfahren, die im voraus als wissenschaftlich angenommen werden. Auch aus diesem Gesichtspunkt geht die aufklärerische Bestimmung der Methode nicht von einer Differenzierung zwischen (reine) Theorie und Praxis, sondern von jener (aristotelischen) These aus, nach der die Kenntnis sowohl in der Praxis als auch in der Theorie immer aus einem Verfahren besteht; und nach dieser Voraussetzung kann die Benutzung psychologisch-anthropologischer Inhalte in einer »philosophia instrumentalis« weniger problematisch aussehen.

Man will hiermit bestimmt keine disziplinare Reform (oder Gegenreform) vorschlagen, doch scheint zumindest ein Grundbestandteil der »philosophia instrumentalis« eine erneute theoretische Debatte wert zu sein.

Das erkenntnistheoretische Thema der tatsächlichen und rechtmäßigen Notwendigkeit der »sinnlichen Vorstellungen«, auf dem Baumgarten seine philosophische Ästhetik gründet, stellt nicht nur das (Leibnizsche) Ergebnis einer Kritik gegenüber Descartes' Gnoseologie dar (weitere Kritiken sind übrigens auch von Locke, Thomasius, u.a. geübt worden); es beinhaltet und verstärkt auch eine Voraussetzung, die sowohl von den Befürwortern als auch von den Gegnern von Descartes gebilligt wurde. Kurz formuliert heißt es, daß die Psychologie über eine methodische Funktion verfügt, weil sie in der Lage ist über die gründliche Gliederung von Ontologie und Gnoseologie Rechenschaft ablegen zu können. Vielmehr: sie ist die einzige Disziplin, die sich in solcher so günstigen Lage befindet. Im Grunde genommen könnte man die ganze methodologische Debatte des Rationalismus als eine Fortsetzung der in der *Regula XII* enthaltene Problematik verstehen, wo Descartes sich gezwungen sieht, ein psychologisches (bzw.

sogar psychophysiologisches) Paradigma in eine Abhandlung über die Methode einzufügen. Indem es auf die Fragen antwortet, was Verstand und Körper sind, und wie der Geist den Körper informiert, beantwortet gesagtes Muster in Wirklichkeit eine viel allgemeinere Frage: jede Kenntnis – sowohl die natürliche, als auch die methodisierte und formalisierte – wird in der Tat auf das Sein durch eine psychologische Vorrichtung zurückgeführt, die seinerseits notgedrungen eine ästhetische Vorrichtung impliziert. Die Tatsache, daß sich Descartes in der *Regula XII* verpflichtet sieht, dem *De anima* eine Antwort zu geben und dabei dessen Paradigma der »tabula rasa« zu bewahren und zu bearbeiten, hat damit zu tun, daß dieses Thema üblicherweise benutzt wird, um die Verdoppelung der »äußerlichen« Welt in einer »inneren« Welt zu beschreiben. Diese Verdoppelung, bzw. Trennung, ist seinerseits Muster und Metapher des Unterschieds zwischen »das, was es gibt« und »das, was erfahren wird«, zwischen dem Bereich der Dinge, die ganz schlicht existieren, und dem Bereich des Wahren und des Falschen. Natürlich – man hat es sofort festgesetzt – gehören »außen« und »innen« zu einer Metapher, denn es ist begriffsmäßig sehr problematisch, »das, was es gibt« als »das Äußere« und »das, was erfahren wird – wahr oder falsch« als »das Innere« zu bezeichnen. Doch der Versuch, diese Metapher in einen Begriff umzuwandeln, hat während der ganzen modernen Debatte über die Methode (zumindest bis zum Idealismus) eine zentrale Rolle gespielt. Schon Bacon drückte es wie folgt aus (*Novum organum*, »Vorrede«): die Methode dient zur »Wiederherstellung, bzw. Verbesserung jener Beziehung zwischen dem Verstand und den Dingen, die auf der Erde, bzw. zwischen den irdischen Dingen, nichts seinesgleichen hat«.

Es scheint nun schwer zu behaupten, daß diese philosophische Arbeit an der Metapher der zwei Welten (die äußere und die innere) diese Metapher völlig abgenutzt hat, u.z. eine Metapher, aus der die aufklärerische Ästhetik entstanden ist, und derer Bestimmung als »einfach psychologische« nie überzeugend sein kann. Doch, wenn auch dies der Fall wäre, bliebe trotzdem eine Grundalternative: entweder beruht die Ästhetik vor allem auf der allgemeinen (sicherlich sehr abstrakten und unoriginellen) Problematik der Beziehung zwischen dem, was es gibt, und dem, was wir kennen, oder sie wird von einem besonderen Objekt bestimmt, das man ihr äußerlich zuteilt. In diesem Falle, würde man ihr jedoch die Rolle einer Technik oder (bestenfalls) einer angewandten Wissenschaft zuschreiben – und das unabhängig davon, ob sie sich darüber bewußt ist, oder ob gesagtes Objekt ein großes Ansehen genießt.

De quelle couleur une pensée philosophique? Grise ou noire bien sûr. Du moins, c'est l'impression qui se dégage à la fois de l'histoire de la Philosophie en tant qu'étude des «moments historiques que la pensée humaine a adoptés durant des siècles», selon le mot de Fr. Châtelet, et d'un certain enseignement de la philosophie comme discipline scolaire. Cette histoire et cet enseignement de la philosophie disposent que la connaissance des textes d'auteurs est un exercice qui rend la réflexion familière et habituelle, et partant, ils aident chacun à s'orienter dans la vie selon son propre pouvoir de réflexion. Descartes n'en attendait pas moins de la philosophie.

«(...) Il vaut beaucoup mieux se servir de ses propres yeux pour se conduire, et jouir par même moyen de la beauté des couleurs et de la lumière, que non pas de les avoir fermés et suivre la conduite d'un autre; mais ce dernier est encore meilleur que de les tenir fermés et suivre la conduite d'un autre; mais ce dernier est encore meilleur que de les tenir fermés et n'avoir que soi pour se conduire. Or c'est proprement avoir les yeux fermés, sans tâcher jamais de les ouvrir, que de vivre sans philosopher; et le plaisir de voir toutes les choses que notre vue découvre n'est point comparable à la satisfaction que nous donne la connaissance de celles qu'on trouve par la philosophie; et enfin, cette étude est plus nécessaire pour régler nos mœurs et nous conduire en cette vie, que n'est l'usage de nos yeux pour guider nos pas» (Descartes, 1637).

On peut passer sous silence l'éloge de la philosophie que comporte cette pensée pour souligner les éléments esthétiques qu'amène la définition cartésienne de la philosophie. Descartes en effet parle ici du plaisir des yeux, du plaisir de voir et de découvrir qui reste peu de choses à côté du plaisir de la connaissance philosophique. L'exercice philosophique ne consiste pas nécessairement à voir le monde en gris. Philosopher c'est se servir de ses propres yeux pour se conduire, et jouir de la beauté des couleurs et des lumières, le découvrir en couleurs et sous la lumière. Descartes un penseur de la modernité et un penseur moderne: cette vérité est bien établie, mais Descartes un penseur en couleurs, voilà ce qu'une lecture esthétique de cette page permet d'ajouter. A la vérité, cet état de choses n'est pas surprenant ou tout au moins elle ne devrait pas l'être compte tenu du lien essentiel qui

unit modernité et image dans l'histoire des idées en Occident. D'où vient donc que le philosophe apparaisse si souvent comme le spécialiste des choses grises et sombres? Notre propos ne sera pas de répondre directement à cette question. Il vise cependant à montrer que par le biais de l'art, on peut cultiver un rapport plus vivant et plus réel à la philosophie: la pratiquer sans nécessairement s'ennuyer; la pratiquer en ouvrant ses propres yeux plutôt que voir le monde par procuration.

1 Art, Philosophie et Modernité

«A maints égards, le discours philosophique de la modernité rencontre et recoupe le discours esthétique» (Habermas, 1985, préface). Qu'on la pense comme rationalisation et désenchantement d'un monde s'organisant autour de l'entreprise privée et de l'Etat comme le fit Max Weber ou qu'on la tienne pour un rapport réflexif entre les traditions (Comte), ou encore pour la volonté d'éradication du mythe par la raison (Nietzsche et Adorno), il reste que «c'est d'abord dans la critique esthétique que se précise la conscience de la modernité qui s'en trouve posée comme question et comme exigence «de se fonder par ses propres moyens» (Habermas, 1985). En effet c'est la fameuse «querelle des Anciens et des modernes» au début du XVIII^e qui instruit et installe durablement la notion de moderne. Se rebellant contre l'ordre ancien, les modernes se révoltent contre «l'idée que le classicisme français se fait de lui-même en assimilant le concept aristotélien de perfection à celui de progrès, tel qu'il avait été suggéré par la science moderne» (Habermas, 1985).

S'érigeant contre la tradition de l'imitation des modèles anciens, les modernes rejettent le dogme d'une beauté parfaite, absolue et éternelle et se fixe des critères d'un beau moins prétentieux: un beau relatif et historique. Dans cette volonté de rupture s'esquisse l'idée de nouveau commencement, d'auto-fondation. Cette idée spécifique des Lumières se trouve déjà clairement articulée par Descartes. En effet lorsqu'il prend sur lui de ne plus croire en ce que tout le monde croit et de n'admettre que ce qui aura survécu aux cribles de son doute devenu hyperbolique pour être plus radical. Descartes se détermine comme un moderne et c'est comme philosophe des temps modernes qu'il prend sa place aux côtés de Kepler et Galilée. Heidegger du reste voit dans l'engagement philosophique cartésien le paradigme même de la modernité. Est moderne celui qui à l'instar de Descartes ne pense pas par reproduction d'un monde ou d'un ordre qui lui préexiste, mais pense en son nom propre, se posant dans une opposition

au monde. Vidée de tout sens préalable, le monde est investi à nouveaux frais de sens et de valeurs qui le représentent, lui donnant une nouvelle présence (*Darstellung*).

Si l'art est modernité qu'est-ce qui dans l'art atteste de la dite modernité? Hegel répondrait «l'art est la manifestation la plus haute de l'Idée». L'absolu comme esprit existe en soi et pour soi. Dans le monde, il traverse l'esprit fini, se donnant l'occasion de se saisir dans son essentialité. Le premier moment de ce savoir senti et immédiat, c'est l'art. L'intuition sensible y donne à la Vérité sa formation sensible mais chaque phénomène a une signification autre que sensible. C'est en l'art que la Vérité atteint sa forme la plus parfaite. Qu'est-ce à dire?

Pour Hegel l'art représente, c'est-à-dire présente à nouveau, les objets, les hommes et les situations. Un objet artistiquement traité n'est plus seulement lui-même en tant que plate objectivité, il devient porteur de sens. Ce qui signifie que la représentation par l'art apporte une certaine valorisation de l'objet. Les souverains africains de tous les temps le savent qui s'adjugeaient les meilleurs artistes et les meilleurs griots pour frapper à la porte de l'histoire et les seigneurs d'aujourd'hui, le savent qui prescrivent à leurs fonctionnaires de travailler sous la photo du président. Survivance d'idolâtrie?

Hegel aurait-il reconnu la modernité en Afrique s'il avait vu l'Afrique des arts et des artistes au lieu de l'imaginer d'après les récits des voyageurs de son temps? Aurait-il apprécié à sa juste signification le fait que l'art africain ne s'applique aucun interdit de la représentation? L'art africain dans sa production dominante imagine davantage la nature qu'il ne l'imité. Les cubistes ne s'y tromperont pas: les sculptures africaines valident une image de l'homme créateur. Kant notait que ce n'est pas en répétant la nature mais en la représentant que l'homme se rapporte à Dieu, à l'Esprit, à la Liberté, au progrès, à la modernité. En cela, l'homme est bien à l'image de Dieu qui comme chacun sait produit, crée des choses qui ne sont pas données dans la nature. Il n'y a pas modernité sans représentation et la modernité est l'époque de la représentation.

La modernité n'est pas seulement assumption de la représentation, elle est aussi dépassement, recomposition, purification de la représentation. Si les artistes tels Homère et Hésiode résistent à la mise au pas qui ressort des propos de Socrate et Platon, c'est dire que le moderne et le non-moderne ne sont pas nécessairement en rupture. Ils peuvent être les versants contradictoires d'une même époque.

L'Afrique des traditions est aussi Afrique de la modernité et inversement. C'est indubitable même pour l'intellectuel africain, qui sur le chemin

de l'université, temple du savoir nouveau, bute parfois contre des sacrifices exposés aux carrefours comme pour narguer les feux rouges aux lumières trop souvent aveugles. Les peintres naïfs ivoiriens sont très sensibles à cette proximité distante qu'ils traduisent par une juxtaposition village-ville où les scènes de l'une débordent dans l'autre sans médiation. C'est que la modernité qui se projeta comme *Aufklärung*, c'est-à-dire philosophie des Lumières, promène beaucoup d'ombres portées. Adorno et Horkheimer ont analysé avec beaucoup de perspicacité cette dialectique des Lumières qui accumule contradictions et ambiguïtés qui développe un monde. La raison n'est pas comme elle le prétend, l'autre du mythe puisqu'elle développe le mythe de la raison et le fétichisme de la rationalité. Effectivement les prophétismes africains sont des moments de réenchancement du monde. «En fait, si la christianisation, comme beaucoup d'auteurs depuis Max Weber l'ont souligné à propos de l'Europe, participe d'un mouvement de sécularisation accompagnant notamment la formation de classes moyennes attirées par le modèle occidental, les prophétismes contrarient peu ou prou ce mouvement. Car en collant au plus près des manifestations très matérielles de la modernité, ils refusent précisément à celles-ci tout caractère de désenchantement et perpétuent au contraire la mémoire vive d'une histoire ivoirienne commencée sous le signe du miracle» (Dozon, 1995).

On comprend mieux pourquoi le chercheur en philosophie peut s'attacher à l'art. Matrice primordiale de la modernité, figure inaugurale et prospective de la modernité, l'art est comme le remarque Adorno, le dernier refuge de la subjectivité. Il porte une force novatrice que l'industrie culturelle s'efforce de dévoyer en divertissement. Ainsi donc l'art offre à l'intelligence théorique des indices plus pertinents que l'occidentalisation ou l'urbanisation. L'occidentalisation est le devenir-monde d'une vision rationnelle du monde alors que la modernité, pour avoir été mise en évidence quelque part dans le monde, n'est pas la chose propre d'une culture. C'est plutôt un appel de la raison à dépasser ses propres limites, ses propres normes et partant, celles de son environnement immédiat.

L'enjeu d'une théorie des arts africains se décide autour d'une proposition centrale: L'Afrique a peut-être été «sous-développée» quelque part, sait-on jamais? Mais très certainement, elle ne l'aura jamais été au plan des arts. Au fait avez-vous remarqué que les afro-pessimistes notamment Etounga Manguelle (1984) et Axelle Kabou (1990) qui font leur nid dans le culturalisme, disséquant à longueur de pages ce qu'ils conviennent d'appeler la culture africaine, en disposent, sans jamais le long de leurs péroraisons écrire, ne serait-ce que quelques lignes, sur les arts et les artistes ! La campagne de l'incapacité de la culture africaine au développement à partie liée

avec eux là qui commettent le tour de force de barder l'Afrique d'une culture sans art et sans artistes.

La reconnaissance de l'Afrique par l'Occident, Occident s'érigeant comme «le phallus du monde» (Derrida, 1990), fut laborieuse et tardive. Quoiqu'elle reste inachevée et peut-être bien qu'elle est de l'ordre de l'inachevable, son histoire révèle la présence de l'art et des artistes aux avant-postes de ce combat pour la reconnaissance. Cette reconnaissance ne se fit pas sans violence. Lorsqu'au XVII^e siècle, le marchand hollandais Dapper sans jamais mettre les pieds en Afrique se passionne pour les objets d'art Afrique, les objets qu'il collecte sont déjà des objets volés ou arrachés. Cette logique du rapt et de la violence fonctionne encore lorsque la mission Dakar-Djibouti, conduite par Marcel Griaule et animée entre autre par Michel Leiris, parcourt l'Afrique dès 1929. Si bien que pendant que les cubistes font une fête aux sculptures noires des voyageurs opèrent à l'ombre de la domination. La reconnaissance de l'art africain dans l'art universel est le versant rassurant d'une pratique d'expropriation violente. Réelle au départ celle-ci s'est fait plus diffuse aujourd'hui; elle s'est fait économique, culturelle et symbolique.

L'effectivité de cette réception plus ou moins douloureuse explique que les artistes d'hier et la plupart de ceux d'aujourd'hui ne pâtissent pas de ce nihilisme réactif qui sévit dans le débat intellectuel africain sous la forme du «nous aussi»: nous aussi nous avons une écriture, nous aussi nous avons une philosophie, une sociologie, une mathématique. Et pour l'attester, on monta des «ethno-philosophies», des ethno-sociologies, des ethno-mathématiques». Mais le savoir-faire et la virtuosité de nos chercheurs les plus émérites n'arrivent pas à dissiper le scepticisme critique que nous réservons à ces ethno-sciences apparaissant toujours déjà comme des «sciences du pauvre» sinon des fausses sciences. Là dessus le Nigérian Oruka (1972) nota brillamment: «On présente comme 'religion africaine' ce qui n'est peut-être qu'une superstition, et on attend du monde blanc qu'il admette que c'est en effet une religion, mais une religion africaine. On présente comme 'philosophie africaine' ce qui dans tous les cas, est une mythologie, et une fois de plus, la culture blanche est invitée à admettre que c'est en effet une philosophie, mais une philosophie africaine. On présente comme 'démocrate africaine' ce qui a toutes les apparences d'une dictature, et l'on attend de la culture blanche qu'elle admette qu'il en est ainsi. Et ce qui de toute évidence est un anti-développement a-développement) ou un pseudo-développement est décrit comme le développement et, de nouveau, le monde blanc est invité à admettre que c'est du développement, mais naturellement un 'développement africain'.»

Le pendant de cette philosophie au rabais c'est cette autre qui évitant de se rendre compte qu'elle a un contexte et que seuls les contextes donnent une tessiture aux textes de la pensée, se forclôt sur la litanie de préférence jargonnable des propositions générales invérifiables. Qu'un professeur de philosophie élabore sur l'art en général et de préférence sur l'art chez Platon ou chez Hegel, qu'il s'engage dans «les déserts glacés de l'abstraction» pour deviser en bonne compagnie sur des idées générales, des notions et des concepts; qu'il se fasse «phonographe», citant ses maîtres en grec, en latin, en allemand en attendant de penser par cœur en anglais. Il fera très philosophe. Mais ce philosophiquement correct, ce ronronnement qui donne l'impression d'une machine qui fonctionne, les moteurs qui tournent ronronnent n'est-ce pas, cette musiquette des pensées qu'on n'a pas pensées et qu'on agite, à la limite cela peut-être faire de la philosophie, mais très certainement ce n'est pas encore philosopher. Descartes en conviendra: garder les yeux fermés sur notre contexte pour se laisser conduire par des yeux autres ouverts sur un autre temps et un autre contexte, n'est pas philosopher. C'est encore moins être moderne et nous ajoutons, tout au plus ce serait *philosopher*.

Parce que les arts africains n'ont à liquider ni passif ni mauvaise conscience de ce type, ils vivent leur africanité sans le poids du regard extérieur et sans zèle, sans triomphalisme et sans auto-proclamation. Par conséquent, ils accèdent plus sereinement à l'universel exprimant leur différence sans entrer dans la logique conflictuelle de la réfutation. Les bronzes d'Ifé sont universels, les sculptures baoulés et sénoufos sont universelles, les musiques madingues, zaïroises sont universelles.

Vous l'aurez remarqué, on parle des «bronzes d'Ifé», pas de Iguégué, sculpteur à Ifé au XII^e. On ne parle pas davantage du maître de la croix perlée, ni du Maître de la chaîne de Léopard, ni du Maître des casques gravés. De chacun de ces fabuleux créateurs du royaume du Bénin au XIV^e, il existe des oeuvres de très grande facture. Mais qui se souvient encore d'eux et comment a-t-on pu oublier leur nom?

Pendant longtemps la théorie de l'art africain aussi bien celle des africanistes que celle des africains dont des théoriciens de la négritude Senghor y compris, se pâma devant l'excellence des œuvres africaines, passant sous silence les noms des artistes. Or pas plus qu'il n'y a pas de science sans savoir, pas plus qu'il n'y a pas de philosophie sans philosophes, il n'y a pas d'art africain sans artiste africain et il n'y a pas d'Afrique réelle s'il n'y a pas d'Africains créateurs d'africanités. L'Afrique fantôme c'est aussi l'Afrique «imaginariée» de l'extérieur par des gens qui trop apeurés par ce que l'Afrique réelle aurait pu leur révéler sur eux-mêmes, la mythifie et la mystifie.

Si notre mémoire et notre inconscient collectif restent surchargés de personnages et de personnalités qui confrontent les idées qui font l'Afrique, idées diffusées aussi bien par ceux qui se prévalent «d'avoir fait l'Afrique» pour dire qu'ils ont résidé en Afrique, que par ceux qui comme Hegel la construisent à partir de leur table de travail, si donc nous ne risquons pas d'être en manque d'Africains «bâfrant, puant, suant», s'il est certain que nous ne serons jamais en panne de guerres tribales, de famines, de maladies insidieuses, de dictateurs aux petits pieds rappelant à la fois les intrépides commandants de cercle et les roitelets réputés sanguinaires de l'histoire nationale, en revanche, nous pourrions être en panne si nous ne le sommes déjà de sujets créateurs de cultures, de valeurs; de sujets qui partent à «la conquête du monde en tant qu'image conçue (...); de sujets par qui «l'homme lutte pour la situation lui permettant d'être l'étant qui donne la mesure à tout étant et arrête toutes les normes» (Heidegger), 1962); de sujets restaurateurs de la conscience comme Cheikh Anta Diop qui recherchant une médiane entre synthèse et métissage culturels pense que «la plénitude culturelle ne peut que rendre un peuple plus apte à contribuer au progrès général de l'humanité et à se rapprocher des autres peuples en connaissance de cause.»

Nous pourrions manquer d'agents de notre modernité car être moderne ce n'est point être bardé des ustensiles de la modernité, radio, télé, voiture, villa, téléphone et que sais-je encore?, à l'image des tirailleurs sénégalais, dont certains étaient ivoiriens, rentrant au village avec gamelle, cuillers, fourchettes, brodequins, treillis, français de tirailleur, toutes choses admirablement décrites par Ahmadou Kourouma (1990) dans *Monné, Outrages et Défis*. La modernité ne se donne pas dans des récipients ou des gadgets. C'est une attitude de convocation et de représentation du monde global en mon propre nom; c'est un comportement qui consiste à rapporter le monde au sujet qui le re-fléchit, à nouveaux frais. Ce sujet n'est plus un vassal soumis à un souverain tout puissant, mais un citoyen, c'est-à-dire un sujet de droits. La modernité est un acte d'assomption de soi dans le monde et face au monde, tel que le citoyen éprouve sa liberté dans son émancipation de toute tutelle. Un tel sujet ne saurait être un individu, c'est une singularité en ce sens qu'il porte au maximum d'intelligence les aspirations d'une époque autant que ses errances, ses peurs, ses angoisses et ses espoirs. Un tel sujet vaut par ses actes qui doivent en arriver à se décliner au profit de son nom, promu au rang de signature, de marque.

Jacques Derrida (1984) montre à la faveur d'une histoire autour de la déclaration d'indépendance des Etats-Unis, comment une signature peut en arriver à se faire crédit et se fonder en droit. Jefferson le secrétaire ré-

dacteur de la déclaration d'indépendance des États-Unis, Jefferson donc parlant au nom des représentants du peuple américain à proclamer par ladite déclaration souffrait de se voir amendé, corrigé, amélioré, écouté par ses collègues. Franklin pour le consoler de cette désagréable situation lui raconte une histoire de chapelier.

«Le chapelier, (The Hatter) avait d'abord imaginé une enseigne (sign-board) pour son magasin. Au dessus, l'image et en dessous un texte: 'John Thompson, Hatter, makes and sells hats for ready money' soit: 'John Thompson, chapelier, fabrique et vend cash des chapeaux'. Un ami lui suggère d'effacer 'chapeaux'. A quoi bon, en effet, puisque 'makes hats', est bien assez explicite. Un autre lui propose de supprimer 'makes hats', car l'acheteur se soucie peu de savoir qui fait les chapeaux, dès lors qu'ils lui plaisent (...) Le troisième ami, et Derrida de noter, ce sont toujours les amis qui pressent d'effacer, l'invite à faire l'économie de 'for ready money' car l'usage veut alors qu'on paie 'cash'. Puis, dans le même mouvement, de raturer 'sells hats'; il faudrait être un idiot pour croire que les chapeaux sont donnés ou abandonnés. «Finalement l'enseigne ne porta qu'une image et sous le signe iconique en forme de chapeau, un nom propre, John Thompson» (pp. 29-30).

Un oubli du nom propre a pesé sur l'art et la pensée traditionnels et il nous a paru important de contribuer à le conjurer tout au moins en ce qui concerne les artistes contemporains. Illustrer des noms tels Alpha Blondy, Christian Lattier, Frédéric Bruly Bouabré, Keita Fodéba, Souleymane Keïta, comme des moments critiques de la culture africaine, c'est situer quelques enjeux: de notre modernisation. Devant les noms ci-dessus certains pourraient faire la moue et comme le héron de la fable dédaigner: est-ce là le dîner d'un héron ! Du menu fretin tout ça. A ceux là nous dirons: êtes vous certain de ne pas donner dans le réflexe du valet de chambre dont parle Hegel après Kant et en vertu de sa qualité de domestique ne voit que le côté domestique des personnages? Certes l'important n'est pas d'avoir un nom mais de l'avoir bon et comme le dit le griot «une belle chemise se prête, se prête un beau pantalon, mais un bon nom ne se prête pas».

Par ailleurs, à flanquer les noms de nos pères fondateurs de noms de philosophes, de sociologues, bref de noms de personnes curieuses des choses de l'esprit, on indique que le temps des fondateurs en politique, en art ou en philosophie d'ailleurs est dépassé depuis le temps où la raison humaine dut renoncer à atteindre la pierre de touche.

En même temps qu'elle reconnaissait ses limites à fournir les raisons suffisantes, la raison humaine depuis au moins le XIX^e, a tiré les conséquences de ce que «ce qui nous donne à penser c'est que nous ne pensons pas

encore (Heidegger) »; que ce qui nous donne à ordonner, à mettre de l'ordre c'est le chaos; «que la bêtise (non pas l'erreur) constitue la plus grande impuissance de la pensée, mais aussi la source de son pouvoir dans ce qui la force à penser» (Deleuze, 1968).

Par ailleurs, flanquer les noms propres d'une Afrique larmoyante de ceux d'une autre chantant, sculptant, inventant, créant, c'est disposer d'autres modèles à côtés du modèle hégémonique du politique. Oui jeunes gens, on peut respirer en Afrique sans entrer en politique. Point n'est besoin d'avoir un grand nom. Au demeurant on sait que les noms comme d'ailleurs les fétiches peuvent «se gâter». Le nom n'est pas un fétiche et il arrive qu'on en change le contenu et la forme. L'identité non plus n'est pas une essence mais une existence, une construction. Tout comme on n'a pas à rester l'identique de sa photo, on n'a pas à se murer dans une identité identique. La modernité c'est ainsi la faillite de la représentation comme identité et l'invention de l'identité de la non-identité. La modernité porte une exigence de rupture. En cela, elle induit une crise des identités. Dans le même temps, elle recouvre d'un voile de transparence et de stabilité, le mouvement irrépressible des exigences et des sensibilités nouvelles qui la transbordent et qu'elle recycle et rebaptise en modernités.

Le dernier aspect de «la politique du nom» ainsi esquissée tient à l'urbanité. Les artistes ci-dessus mentionnés sont comme par hasard des citadins. C'est le lieu de remarquer que pendant trop longtemps, la philosophie dite africaine a tourné autour tout en restant dehors... De plus en plus raidie sur son statut philosophique et sur son africanité, elle ne trouva que très rarement un chemin assuré à l'intérieur. Wolé Soyinka dirait: Elle en oublia de bondir. Et à ne pas conduire à l'intérieur de la philosophie, cette insistance proprement méta-philosophique a sous-développé la philosophie africaine, la définissant comme une philosophie dont l'existence est à elle-même problématique. La philosophie dite africaine se fourvoya aussi sûrement qu'elle se chargea du fardeau absolu de la rectification des bavardages de Kant, et surtout de Hegel et Levi-Bruhl sur l'Afrique. Lorsqu'elle n'enroula pas indéfiniment sa réflexion sur cette critique et son propre statut, elle se rechercha dans les profondeurs improbables d'une tradition constituée comme éternelle et chargée de lui projeter l'image rassurante d'une pensée et d'une raison bien à elle. Devenu contempteur de traditions, le penseur ne s'éveilla pas à la vérité selon laquelle «ce n'est pas dans les grands bois ni dans les sentiers que la philosophie s'élabore, mais dans les villes et dans les rues, y compris dans ce qu'il y a de plus factice en elles» (Deleuze, 1969). Cela dit, nos communications sont écrites et dites en français, avec des citations en anglais sans oublier les nombreux philosophes allemands convoqués et com-

mentés. Or il reste que le jour où il nous sera donné de nous acquitter de nos devoirs en langues nationales africaines, nombreux seront les haut-penseurs et les haut-parleurs qui perdront et leur logique et leur voix, et à ne point douter, des philosophes se retrouveront dans les petits souliers des *philosophieurs*.

Parti pour discuter d'art et de philosophie en Afrique, voilà que par endroits et notamment devant le besoin d'illustrer des idées par des expériences vécues, le «je» a refait surface. J'ai dû parler sinon de moi-même du moins de mes recherches et j'ai parlé en mon nom propre. D'aucuns ont pu penser que je voulais en faire une marque, une signature, un peu comme le chapelier. Ce que nous faisons chacun, ce à quoi nous consacrons notre vie et que nous visons à étayer par nos réflexions et nos engagements, ne gagne-t-il pas en clarté lorsque nous la proclamons à haute voix? Par ailleurs, je voudrais méditer avec vous ce passage où Nietzsche détruisant la fausse massivité de son moi écrit: je pense que je suis trop impie pour croire en moi même, je ne parle jamais aux masses. Pour tenter de «ranger» toutes les hypertrophies du moi «au magasin des accessoires», on peut également suivre Sartre jusqu'aux derniers mots des Mots au moment où l'auteur se définit comme «un homme fait de tous les hommes et qui les vaut tous et que vaut n'importe qui» (Sartre, 1963). S'interroger à haute voix, ici et maintenant suppose donc que l'expérience singulière des recherches de l'officiant qui ne croit pas trop en lui-même, rencontre par endroits l'expérience de chacun. J'espère avoir disposé dans ce laps de temps qui m'était imparti quelques thèmes, quelques problèmes tendant à prouver qu'on peut parler en son nom propre, à propos d'un contenu entier, tout en contribuant à la clarification de la conscience de soi d'une époque, l'époque du village planétaire.

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Germina Nagat
Description and Explanation in Art Exegesis

Motto: »Aesthetics is a reason giving activity.«¹

The topic of this paper, as implied by the title, is a question-beggar: it is assumed that there is a relation between description and explanation in art exegesis. Moreover, it is a topic that many aestheticians would be reluctant to accept as valid and necessary to their field, so one could believe from the beginning that it has a polemic mainspring. If we were to accept the traditional disparities of this century's philosophy, we could say that the theoretical status of description and explanation would not be an interesting problem in a hermeneutical or metaphysical discourse, simply because in such a perspective description is held as an elementary, self-evident operation, while the explanation of art passes for a nonsense. The conceptual pair 'description – explanation' announced by the title is obviously an analytic binomial. However, my intention is not to augment the dispute, choosing *ab initio* the analytic treatment of a problem that had a different career – namely, a *wrong* career – in the continental, outdated philosophy, but rather to enhance the benefits of pluralism, which can provide access to any series of concepts or method that indicates even the smallest clarification or progress in understanding art. The reason for designating the discussion of art by an ambiguous and eccentric term, *exegesis*, is that in my opinion both art criticism and aesthetics have to answer by specific means to two fundamental questions, more or less explicit: *why* does the work of art exist, and *how*, and both questions are directly related to description and explanation.

I said that the relation between description and explanation is a typically analytic question. However, if we consider it strictly from the historiographic perspective, its connection with art exegesis seems fallacious or artificial. From the very beginning, the leaders of analytic trend ignored or referred only indirectly to the problems of art, partly because those problems did not seem essential to the clarification of the philosophical realm and knowledge, partly because its sources did not include art among the main issues.² Even now, when it is said that we have entered 'the post-ana-

¹ William Righter, *Logic and Criticism*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963, p. 22.

² Arnold Isenberg thinks that the minor attention paid by the first analytic philosophers to aesthetics and art criticism is due to the fact that »none of the leaders of the analytic movement, such as Moore and Russell, have ventured into a field – i.e.

lytic era', analytic aesthetics does not enjoy more credit: on the contrary, it is rejected as a late syndrome, some sort of childish disease which is embarrassing to experience as a grown-up. Despite this frivolous objection, I will try to show, using description and explanation as a guideline, that, on the one hand, analytic aesthetics is not at all excessive or tardy, and, on the other hand, that its general principles which took their classical form decades ago, can still be improved.

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Looking back to the beginning of the century, when the »linguistic turn« emerged from the principles of logical atomism, it becomes clear that the theoretical status of description did not become any distinct for all its vacillations between the opposite limits of the same trend. It is true that in analytic terms description has been discussed mainly in its *philosophical* sense. Its connection with art came later, and only to the extent to which art was relevant as a source of examples in a specialised, logical context. Naturally, description proved to be a questionable issue for aesthetics only after it was admitted as a general philosophical problem.

The logical starting point in the analysis of description had a strong influence on this concept's career, including its aesthetic implications. In his celebrated *Theory of Descriptions*, Russell stressed that description is the background for a distinct type of knowledge (*knowledge by description*), as distinct from *knowledge by acquaintance*, the latter being logically independent from the knowledge of truths. Knowledge by description, although apparently based on sensations, depends on the knowledge of particular truths that make the connection between the object described and sensory data. Despite the common impression that sensory data result from direct experience, in fact objects and other people's minds cannot be known by acquaintance, but only by description. Therefore, description is an essential sequence in the knowledge of things, and, virtually, it becomes a prerequisite to any discourse that records this knowledge (be it philosophical, scientific or artistic).

In his theory of descriptions, Russell was led to the conclusion that most of the nouns and proper names are, in fact, descriptions. More often than not we have the impression of talking about things we know contiguously,

aesthetics – that was not shunned by Bacon, Hobbes, Locke or Kant.« See Arnold Isenberg, »Analytic Philosophy and the Study of Art«, in *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 46 (1988), pp. 125-36. Other authors, and among them Richard Shusterman, who particularly insists on this idea, count Moore as »a prototype of analytic aesthetics.« See Richard Shusterman, »Introduction: Analysing Analytic Aesthetics«, in Shusterman (ed.), *Analytic Aesthetics*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989, p. 4.

but in fact our knowledge emerges from prior, implicit descriptions that we are not aware of. The leading part of description in the process of knowledge comes from the fact that it allows us to transcend the limits of individual experience and to communicate it to others by a meaningful language, restored by logic. In order to be accepted as part of this language, descriptions must be reduced to those elements that we know immediately, and take the form of a non-ambiguous, definite description. An object is known by description when we know that »there is one *and only one* object that has a certain property.«³ The main thing about this definition is that this univocal relation works as a truth condition: if there is no real object which has the property mentioned by description, *or there is more than one*, that statement is false. As for the descriptions of imaginary objects (non-entities), they must be transformed into existential statements, whose truth condition – the correspondence with a real object – can eventually be verified by a non-mediated experience.

The philosophical implications of the theory of description have been considered so influential that Russell's perspective was at first greeted as »a paradigm of philosophy«.⁴ If we were to accept this enthusiastic perception entirely, the consequences for aesthetics and art exegesis would be devastating: one can hardly imagine a situation in art where an aesthetic quality corresponds to a single object, in order to have definite descriptions for every work of art and to transform the language of art exegesis into a »meaningful language«. Subsequently, the critics rightfully stressed that Russell's demands against philosophical language are exaggerated, that he did not explain how the description works in common language, and mainly that the univocity condition can be satisfied only in a logical, artificial frame. In most of the cases, the way in which we can refer to a particular object cannot be established except by particular circumstances: we leave it to the context to show which specific object we are referring to. Despite the restrictive character that makes it unrealistic, among the advantages of this theory is that it shows the importance of the distinction between the grammatical form of a sentence and the logical form behind it, and that these two forms cannot be made to coincide, although the perfect overlap would be ideal. But what I think is an essential fact about Russell's theory, even if apparently it indicates nothing to art or aesthetics, is the accent on the idea of implicit de-

³ By this rule of denotation, Russell restores the principle expressed by Occam a few centuries ago, known as Occam's razor, which confines the philosophical entities to those which have a correspondent in the real world.

⁴ As an illustration of this enthusiasm, see F. P. Ramsey, *The Foundations of Mathematics*, p. 263.

scription underlying proper names, and especially on the binding correspondence between description and object, namely, between description and reality.

A completely different view has Ludwig Wittgenstein, the other founder of the analytic trend, this time with an explicit reference to aesthetics and artistic objects.⁵ Again, the premises are not favourable to art exegesis, but for different reasons and by different arguments. Wittgenstein found the traditional course of aesthetics ridiculous, and also its official justification, unchanged since the debut of this discipline: to define what is beautiful is as ridiculous as it is to define a tasteful coffee, so absurd that it cannot be put into words.⁶ Wittgenstein was convinced that art criticism and aesthetics are meant »to express a reaction«, usually emotional, but it can be a sensory one as well. For this reason, aesthetic experience does not have too many chances to transcend the status of a strictly individual affair, whose verbal transcription is so inconclusive that it becomes useless, a mere *flatus voci*. A gesture, a simple exclamation or, even better, its reiteration would suffice in order to share such an experience. If we try to describe God's expression in Michelangelo's *Adam* we will see that it cannot be formulated and that »we should paint it again«. It is easier to justify a negative evaluation of an artistic object, because it is easier to find reasons to motivate dissatisfaction, than content. It is so difficult to share the impressions you have in front of an art object, that the chances to be approved or understood are real only if your collocutor accidentally has the same reaction.

In his essay *Philosophy of Art after Analysis and Romanticism*,⁷ Nicholas Wolterstoffs highlights the idea that, although analytic philosophy emerged mainly as a reaction against romantic essentialism and »expressionism«, analytic aesthetics did not succeed to get rid of all the obsessions of romanticism and maintained some of its delusions, such as »the uniqueness«, »the gratuitousness« and »the autonomy« of the work of art. I would add to this list another prejudice, which I consider to be more discordant and inconsistent with the analytic ideal: the emotionalistic view, which bears both on

⁵ I am talking, of course, about the later Wittgenstein and his controversial text *Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1966). Here I would like to prevent the usual objection, which I take to be shallow and artificial, that these lectures are a doubtful record of Wittgenstein's sayings, so their credibility should be lesser. If we were to apply this rigour consistently, Wittgenstein's single work would be the *Tractatus*, because it is the only book he published during his lifetime.

⁶ Wittgenstein, *op. cit.*, II, 2.

⁷ Nicholas Wolterstoffs, »Philosophy of Art after Analysis and Romanticism«, in Shusterman (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 32-58.

the art making and on the art criticism. It assumes that emotions are the main source of creation and the only background of criticism, and that it is not the work of art with its real features, but the *reactions* of the perceiver that gives the topic of art exegesis. Unfortunately, this residual romanticism persists even in Wittgenstein's opinion about aesthetics. According to Wittgenstein, the problems of aesthetics and the problems of the effects art has upon us are the same thing. In a footnote to *Lectures*, the subject of aesthetics is even more clearly restricted to the emotionalistic outlook: the problems of aesthetics, which are due to the influence art has upon us, do not concern the way these things are produced.⁸ The reason why the work of art cannot be described is that our personal feelings cannot be expressed, but only suggested by words, or ideally, by gestures. This substitution between the object and the emotional reaction to it is the core of Wittgenstein's view about description, and, eventually, about aesthetics.

Wittgenstein also rejects the possibility of a psychology of art, given the fact that he rejects psychology in principle. Nothing about art would change as a result of this science's progress (even though there were many hopes set on it at that time), since it is doubtful we can talk about laws of mind which we can discover in the long run. The idea of aesthetics being a branch of psychology, as well as that of a happy time, when all the mysteries of Art (written with capital letters) will have been solved thanks to psychological experiments, seems to him totally idiotic.⁹ Under these circumstances, which obliterate the chances of both metaphysical and scientific approaches of art, the reach of art exegesis cannot be otherwise but insignificant to knowledge.

If we confront Russell's and Wittgenstein's views on description, we can notice that analytic aesthetics obviously inherited from its forebearers nothing else but a dilemma, perfectly summarised by Shusterman as »descriptive accuracy *versus* prescriptive clarity«,¹⁰ and illustrated with a short, imaginative fragment from *Philosophical Investigations*: »won't it become a hopeless task to draw a sharp picture corresponding to the blurred one? /.../ And this is the position you are in if you look for definitions corresponding to our concepts in aesthetics or ethics.«¹¹ But the analytic survey of description cannot stop to these two extreme options, because subsequently they produced compound versions, more sophisticated, but more ambiguous as well. Between Russell's view, which ascribes description a major role in the process of knowledge and compels it to adequacy with the reality of the object,

⁸ Wittgenstein, *op.cit.*, IV, 1.

⁹ Wittgenstein, *op.cit.*, II, 35.

¹⁰ Shusterman, *op.cit.*, p. 13.

¹¹ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, para. 77.

and Wittgenstein's contemptuous notes, which forbid any relevance to aesthetics and even the possibility of being verbally expressed, there are many other readings of the problem. The new elements involved are the connection between description, evaluation and interpretation, and, for a less conformistic approach, its openness to *explanation*.

A frequent assessment in art theory and criticism, as well as in the theory of argumentation and even in epistemology, is that description cannot be separated from evaluation (very much as observation is theory-laden). The reason for this overlapping is the usual vocabulary of descriptions, which is almost identical with common language. Faced with a logical examination, art descriptions show a serious handicap, which I would call *the adjectival handicap*. Adjectives are not neutral, and more often than not to choose an attribute implies a positive or negative valorisation; when one describes a work of art, one implicitly states a value judgement. Moreover, the basic concepts of aesthetics themselves seem to be mere adjectives, abusively invested with a conceptual rank. Because of this adjectival source, some set all their hopes on analytic aesthetics, while others abandoned this field in favour of art theory,¹² which is still regarded – probably by virtue of the natural philosophical elitism – as a »second order« discipline. Under these circumstances, the question is: given its adjectival nature, what is the role of description in analytic aesthetics? Is it compatible with its anti-subjectivist, anti-romantic ideal and with the search for clarity?

I think the answer to this question is favourable to description. It also pleads for the philosophical pluralism I mentioned at the beginning of this text, and it contradicts the simplistic opinion that analytic aesthetics is an attempt to sterilise art exegesis. Even if description seems to depend on common language, it does not disturb the analytic ambitions at all: there is no need to adopt an extreme position and to design a fictitious limit case, in which description is neutral and evaluation is absent, as Northrop Frye suggested in his famous book of the late 1950s, where he calls evaluation »meaningless criticism« and «leisure-class gossip».¹³ Objections to description and evaluation are due to the same confusion underlying Wittgenstein's *Lectures*, which reduces artistic effects to emotional reactions. If we follow this line of argument, we will be forced to adopt a paradoxical position and to assert that, because of its adjectival handicap, any attempt to justify a state-

¹² A good example of this attitude is Ernst Gombrich, who explicitly made his choice for art theory, even if his work has a sufficient philosophical amplitude to lay claims as aesthetics.

¹³ Northrop Frye, *The Anatomy of Criticism*, Princeton: New York, Princeton University Press, 1957, p. 18.

ment in art exegesis is pointless, and every criticism is a private, first-person affair which mysteriously tends to become public.

However, a further substitution emerged lately, which dominates art criticism and especially literary criticism, and combines *description* and *interpretation*. If description is inevitably subjective and evaluation is implicit, the concept of interpretation covers both meanings and gives them a new semantic amplitude. But it necessarily adds *reasons* or *motivations* to descriptions and evaluations, sometimes in a confusing assortment (for instance, Morris Weitz makes a strange distinction between *descriptive interpretations* and *evaluative interpretations*).¹⁴ Interpretation has been abundantly debated in writing, especially in the theory of literature, without a clear guideline toward a unique model. But the main thing about interpretation is that, be it in analytic or hermeneutical paradigm, it relies on arguments, irrespective of their nature.¹⁵ Therefore, by interpretation, which stands as its counterpart, any description becomes a presentation of *reasons*. I hope this will make using of the word *explanation* sound more natural in a discussion about art.

Again, if we were to follow the initial analytic direction and credit Wittgenstein's view on aesthetic reasons, the whole theoretical assessment of them would be restricted to the observation that they »are of the nature of further descriptions«, that they equals »the description of defects«, and that their relation to evaluation is »neither an empirically causal relation, nor a logical necessary relation.«¹⁶ It seems an aleatoric relation, based on subjective experience; moreover, aesthetic justification by reasons can start from a mere insatisfaction, very much as description does. If this is true, there can be no progress as concerns the theoretical status of art exegesis, and justification becomes useless, as a mere rationalisation of personal impressions.

Suppose that Wittgenstein and other analytic philosophers are right, and description is hopelessly subjective, because of its dependence on common language and because of the adjectival handicap. Still, this basic subjectivism, which also extends on justification, does not change the need and the constraint of reasons at all. It is precisely because description cannot

¹⁴ Morris Weitz, »Interpretation and the Visual Arts«, in *Theoria*, 39 (1973), pp. 101-112.

¹⁵ Despite the common dependence on arguments, it must be said that there is a major difference between these two types of argumentation: the hermeneutical discourse starts from an initial intuition and selects as reasons only the elements which confirm it (the procedure being known as *hermeneutical circle*), while the analytic one is grounded on a critical attitude which consists in confronting the pro and the counter arguments.

¹⁶ H. Morris-Jones, »The Logic of Criticism«, in *The Monist*, 50 (1966), p. 219.

stand by itself as a background of evaluation that reasons and motivations have been introduced in the analytic assessment of the language of art criticism. The emotionalistic perspective I mentioned before – which might be a fair evaluation of the discourse about art, of course, from a logical point of view – is a false impediment for analytic aesthetics to be entirely consistent and credible: it will always be a compulsory relation between the object (in our case, the artistic object) and the word that describes, evaluates, or simply designates it. The object of art is *a real* object, and any linguistic or verbal approach of it must face at least the minimal conditions of truth and assertability. But the work of art is more than a real object, it is a *public object*, and I would like to enhance this fact in order to prevent the facile objection that the reality of the object cannot be a sufficient condition because there are artistic objects whose existence is not material, but symbolic. If there is any difficulty in understanding Russell's idea about reality and existential statements, is quite sufficient to admit that works of art are »public and observable objects«. As Alan Tormey says, »one does not introspect, notice, observe, feel or detect that he judges that *q*. Critical judgements are *formed*, not found, and though the process of forming a critical judgment may be private, the target of the judgment – the art work, the object judged – is not.«¹⁷ Here, as elsewhere, if consistently stressed, subjectivism leads to the relativistic paradox, and a logical paradox is unacceptable in any theoretical or at least non-fictional discourse.¹⁸

Therefore, reasons, as well as descriptions, cannot be entirely first-person affairs. If they were, art exegesis would be unintelligible and maybe even untransmissible. Probably, not even the polemics, which make the glory and the relish of art criticism would not be possible, for there would be no object to quarrel about. The absolute subjectivity cannot be expressed: if it is, it means it surely hides intersubjective elements. To summarize, there are two things that become obvious from the analysis of description. They might sound as mere truisms, but they surely have the quality of the simple truths which restores the path to knowledge from time to time.

First, we know that in common language description cannot be otherwise but adjectival. We also know that it never stands by itself and always needs a further argument, which implies the use of *reasons*. Second, the adjectival handicap proved to be more like an advantage, because all the reasons, including aesthetic reasons, are *tested*. Two of the most common tests are the empirical test – the confrontation of the critical statement with the real object

¹⁷ Alan Tormey, »Critical Judgements«, in *Theoria*, 39 (1973), p. 41.

¹⁸ For an excellent discussion on relativism and its internal limits, on fundamental philosophical topics, see Thomas Nagel's book *The Last Word*, 1997.

– and the corroboration test, namely the test of the professional community, which always stands behind the word *tradition*.

If it is true that we can test and justify our claims about art with no need to get outside the common language and to reject aesthetics or art exegesis as irrelevant to knowledge or futile, why would it be necessary to introduce the concept of *explanation*? Apparently, the analytic tradition itself seems to make this operation pointless, since it credits description as a perfect substitute for explanation. For instance, in *The Problem of Knowledge*, Ayer shows that in philosophy description works as explanation, since philosophical problems cannot be settled by experiment. This position coincides with Wittgenstein's view that art cannot be »explained« otherwise than by the use of reasons (while science can use the explanation by causes or by laws). It is largely considered that justification by reasons is the only possible explanation in art, as it is seen as an instance of »human affairs« (as well as psychology, history, politics and so on).

And why wouldn't the presence of reasons be enough for analytic aesthetics? I think the answer to this question implies different types of arguments. First, there is a methodological argument: we still don't have a minimal model of critical judgement and its justification, and we still miss a typology of aesthetic reasons, not to mention a model of accurate description. Maybe the use of this external model – namely the scientific model – would help, even if it is rightfully considered too »strong« to be uncritically transferred to art exegesis. There are two major arguments against this transfer. First, explanation in science is symmetrical to prediction. Obviously, prediction in art is impossible, because each work of art is unique and its subjective background is beyond any doubt. We can hardly talk about an accurate retrodiction in art exegesis (assuming that description and critical evaluation can stand for retrodiction).¹⁹

However, it must be said that the comparison with science is contested only because more often than not the image of science is naive and abridged. The doubtful character of the symmetry between explanation and prediction is a common place in epistemology, and in order to illustrate this I would like to quote Patrick Suppes's prophecy that »we shall never be able to move from good explanations to good predictions«.²⁰ In science, it is a common situation to face events that »are not predictable, yet in one sense explainable«,²¹ and here Suppes is not talking about the sciences of man or »hu-

¹⁹ Michael Scriven, »The Objectivity of Aesthetic Evaluation«, in *The Monist*, 50 (1966), pp. 159-87.

²⁰ Patrick Suppes, »Explaining the Unpredictable«, in Suppes, *Models and Methods in the Philosophy of Science: Selected Essays*, Dordrecht/Boston: Kluwer, 1993, p. 119.

²¹ Suppes, *op.cit.*, p. 115.

man affairs». I would suggest that three of the types of explanations Suppes recommends as most plausible in science pose no problem to art exegesis: *ex post facto* explanation by reasons, teleological explanation, and explanation by randomness. (For instance, although I never saw an example of this last one, I think it could be very interesting to exercise it with regard to contemporary aleamorphic art, and not only.) Another interesting proposal comes from Von Wright, who, in order to elude the problems of methodological monism in the sciences of man concedes to a form of practical syllogism which could eventually explain most of the human actions.

There are many other arguments to support the need of explanation in art exegesis that I can mention here. Personally, I take the search for »an aesthetic counterpart of science«²² – which probably is a typically analytical syndrome – as perfectly legitimate, as long as Russell's observations about language and things are valid. After all, the work of art is a real object, it is a part of reality as much as a natural event, and all the statements about it must face the criterion of truth and adequacy. However, the major argument that I would like to bring in favour of explanation in art exegesis brings me back to the *why-questions* I have mentioned before.

Despite their inherent problems, there is probably no reason why description and interpretation cannot be accepted as an appropriate answer to the *how-question* about art. Still, this cannot replace the other major question which I think is unavoidable, here as much as elsewhere, because it is an essential element of the human mind. Description is not enough, and we will always need and look for explanations, even if this search is not always explicitly assumed. Personally, I take any aesthetics to be mostly an attempt to answer the implicit *why-question* of art. To answer this question, all we have to do is to return constantly to our fundamental concepts and problems, and to keep the critical spirit awake.

²² Shusterman, *op.cit.*, p. 7.

Ossi Naukkarinen
*Philosophical Aesthetics and the Aesthetics
of Everyday Life*

Introduction

The central aim of the XIVth International Congress of Aesthetics was to illuminate the nature of aesthetics as philosophy. The theme inevitably makes one think about the other side of it as well. Then, the question is, what is non-philosophical aesthetics?

The focus of this paper is the relationship between philosophical aesthetics and other forms of aesthetic practice, and I believe that the nature of aesthetics as philosophy can better be understood comparing it with non-philosophical aesthetics.

I will concentrate on non-philosophical aesthetics, especially on the aesthetics of everyday life, and outline its advantages and drawbacks. What can be done in and through it? What not? If we talk about 'everyday aesthetics', what should we pay attention to in the first place?

I will illuminate the general question with the help of an example – what is »said« of an aesthetic nature through make-up, hair-dos, clothes and other things related to a person's appearance, and what kind of aesthetics can be manifested through such things? And how does this differ from philosophical aesthetics?

I

It is clear that aesthetic conceptions and values can be manifested not only through verbal expressions but also through deeds and action. One can show what one appreciates simply by wearing a certain kind of clothes. In philosophical aesthetics as an academic discipline the typical manner of dealing with aesthetic issues and expressing one's ideas is to write and talk about them. One explicates in words how one connects one's thoughts with the earlier philosophical discourse. But this is indeed not the way one manifests one's aesthetics in everyday surroundings. There, non-verbal or tacit cases of aesthetics are dominant.

But if everyday aesthetics is to a large extent tacit, what does it mean and what does it reveal of the nature of such aesthetics? If ideas are not explained in words but shown through clothes or bodily movements and deeds, what does this indicate? And can something like this be philosophical? What, indeed, can be done through this sort of aesthetics?

I start with some obvious drawbacks of such aesthetics, and move on to its advantages in a moment.

First, the drawbacks – although we can discuss whether or not they actually are drawbacks after all.

1. Firstly, the messages one sends through, say, clothes are often fairly imprecise. Take a look at the accompanying picture, for example. It is easy to see that this attire has something to do with rather unconventional ideas about dressing up. But there are issues that are much more uncertain: what does this person actually appreciate, for example? This particular color? Cut? Material? Designer? How does she want to be understood? Does she like the dress, or is she being forced to wear it? Is her getup an aesthetic statement at all, or is it perhaps a sexual or political one? Tacit messages in everyday life are hints or clues rather than clear signs. Thus, they cannot be very philosophical in the standard meaning of the word, because philosophy, I think, should be as clear and precise as possible. (What kind of clarity and precision philosophy actually needs and what kind of clarity is possible is another, very tough question, of course.)

2. The second point is close to the first one or defines it, namely, such manifestations of aesthetics cannot be analyzed to reveal their nature, their relation to other sorts of aesthetic solutions or to their background. They cannot tell why they are what they are or why they are not something else, and they cannot present alternatives. They simply are what they are. The contrast to well formulated philosophical cases of aesthetics is striking.

3. Thirdly, tacit cases of aesthetics are unable to negate most things. They cannot reveal what is *not* valuable, what is *not* appreciated and so on. Tacit everyday aesthetics is dominantly affirmative. It accepts and emphasizes the things it shows but it does not actually say anything about the things it does not show. A business suit does not deny the value of jeans since it does not take any stand on them. The point of departure of everyday aesthetics is not to question things and reflect ideas through that, in contrast to the point of view of philosophy.

4. The fourth point is the last one, and it is perhaps the most interesting one. Namely, it is obvious that one cannot reach many philosophically interesting questions and areas at all if one sticks to clothes and other such means of presenting one's aesthetic ideas. How could one say anything on



ontology or how could one define anything through that? Such questions, however, are at the very core of academic philosophical aesthetics.

It must be stressed, however, that this last weakness is very strongly created by the everyday *context*. Many art works are quite as mute as normal attire but they can activate these problems because that is what we expect to happen in the art world. Pieces of canvas that look practically the same as pieces of cloth can be seen as some sorts of definition of art or as ontological comments. Consider certain works of Malevitch and their relation to figurative art – they are philosophical, even if not quite in the same way as academic studies. Or what is even more appropriate here, think about Eva and Adele! They create their art through their personal appearance, clothes, make-up and behavior. All in all, tacitness itself is not an absolute obstacle for something to be philosophical, but in everyday surroundings or contexts non-philosophicalness seems to be the case.

Thus, many restrictions are largely due to the way we approach things in everyday life. The things »in themselves«, so to speak, are not as impotent as it might seem at the outset, but the everyday mode of dealing with them leads us to think so. But this, of course, is only functional: our everyday lives must rest largely on simple and unquestioned conceptions about the world if we want to be able to do anything. If we pondered everything profoundly, we would soon starve to death.

So much for the disadvantages of the aesthetics of everyday life.

On the other hand, there are clear advantages in presenting one's aesthetic ideas and values in the tacit everyday way – advantages compared to more philosophical and especially to traditional academic forms of aesthetics.

1. Firstly, in one sense, visual or »displayed« manifestations of one's ideas are more precise than verbal or other conceptual approaches – even if they lack other sorts of precision. One can look like one's aesthetics, so to speak, and it is important to notice that such visual presentations are able to convey information on a nuanced level. I can *say* »She is wearing a black dress«, but that is not at all as exact as the information one gets from *looking* at her dress – then you see exactly what kind of black the black is. This kind of information is only attainable through the senses, not through verbal, conceptual descriptions, with which philosophers often are content. Moreover, if one thinks of what detailed comparisons, as regards colors, for example, one can make do with one's eyes and how poorly equipped we *conceptually* are in this regard, the difference becomes evident. There are always many perceptually different colors that are described and remembered through one concept only. (Note that even if we talked about non-

verbal, visual concepts, they are also rough instruments when compared to what we really see.)

2. Secondly, »wearable aesthetics« is very effective and rapid at conveying information. One can see surprisingly many things practically in a fraction of a second. I can see at least something essential of someone else's aesthetic ideas and show my own ideas to others without problems within a brief moment when we meet in the street. Compare this to the time you have to spend in reading an article or a book about someone's aesthetic ideas – not to mention the time that is necessarily spent on writing such works.

3. Lastly, everyday aesthetics is very swift to change and react to its surroundings. If one wishes to present another sort of aesthetic idea, one only needs to change one's attire, and that can be done within minutes. And if one wishes to react to anything in one's surroundings quickly, this is also easily done. Compare this, once again, to rigid academic/philosophical forms of aesthetics. There, if one wishes to deal with aesthetic issues in a typical way, i.e. through writing, it is not easy to do it very quickly, simply for practical reasons. A profound analysis of any aesthetic question may take years if not decades to produce. There is hardly point in talking about »reactions« here at all.

II

I have presented some of the drawbacks and advantages of everyday aesthetics. Of course I have simplified matters. What one should think about these aspects depends on what one wishes to say about aesthetic questions and to accomplish by certain aesthetic practices. If one's goal is to form a philosophically penetrating analysis about anything, one cannot do it just through wearing clothes. Then, muteness is a disadvantage; one needs words. On the other hand, the aesthetics of everyday life is much simpler than critical analyses, and the place of philosophical aesthetics is not in everyday life. There, other forms of aesthetics are more vital and practical, and speed and simple, even superficial effectiveness count more than deep analyses or conceptual precision. And, of course, tacitness is not a flaw in any serious way.

But different kinds of aesthetics need not be completely disconnected from each other. Philosophical aesthetics can analyze the crucial aspects of everyday aesthetics. It can – and should – analyze what tacitness, imprecision and affirmation mean, what speed or some sort of volatility means, and so on. At the same time, by studying practices that are not philosophical,

philosophy would, through negation, deepen its picture of its own characteristics and capacities as well. Moreover, considering how art-dominated a field philosophical aesthetics has been up till lately, one should try to find out which concepts and questions of that kind of aesthetics are relevant in the context of everyday aesthetics in the first place. Is it, for example, important to ponder what originality or creativity is, as it has been in the art world? I would suggest that it is not crucial simply because such phenomena are not very important in everyday life context. Rather, often their counterparts seem to be.

A systematic map or even a comprehensive list of issues that are central and worthy of attention in everyday aesthetics cannot be presented here – I have tried to say something of that elsewhere – but it is clear that these issues are not quite the same as those that have been pivotal in art philosophy or in any other field of philosophy. The philosophical analysis of everyday aesthetics must be of its own kind.

In any case, the most important thing to my mind is that it seems that philosophical analyses of everyday life could be a good way to make philosophy more interesting and understandable to more people. It would move philosophy closer to their daily lives. On the other hand, stretching philosophy beyond its traditional boundaries creates new kinds of problem for philosophers to ponder. And this, I believe, is the only way to keep philosophy alive in the long run.

Katerina Reed-Tsocha
*Dividing Lines, Impoverished Domains:
The Aesthetic and the Artistic*

This paper is a preliminary investigation into the distinction between two concepts, the viability of the distinction, the precise way of drawing it, the motivation behind it and its general implications. The distinction I will be talking about is one drawn between the concept of the aesthetic and that of the artistic and is applicable to distinct kinds of judgement, value and appreciation. The distinction is widely acknowledged and drawn in many different ways with different purposes in mind.¹ Therefore, when I refer to the motivation behind the distinction I do not mean a welcome desire for conceptual clarity but, rather, much more specific motives: such as considerations of purity at one end (the kind of aesthetic purism found in Beardsley)² and the need to do away with the artwork in favour of the

¹ An overview of the different ways of drawing the distinction is given by Bohdan Dziemidok in his »On Aesthetic and Artistic Evaluations of the Work of Art« in Peter McCormick (ed.) *The Reasons of Art*, Ottawa: Ottawa University Press 1985 and »On the Need to Distinguish Between Aesthetic and Artistic Evaluations of Art« in R. J. Yanal (ed.) *Institutions of Art: Reconsiderations of George Dickie's Philosophy*, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press 1994. See also his »Controversy About the Aesthetic Nature of Art« *British Journal of Aesthetics* 28 (1988) 1-17 and »Aesthetic Experience and Evaluation« in J. Fisher (ed.) *Essays on Aesthetics: Perspectives on the Work of M. C. Beardsley*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press 1983.

With entirely different motivation, the distinction is made out by David Best who links the artistic with the »possibility of expression of a conception of life issues«. See »The Aesthetic and the Artistic, *Philosophy* 57 (1982) 351-372, reprinted as ch. 11 in his *Feeling and Reason in the Arts*, London 1985, and »The Aesthetic and the Artistic«, chapter 12 in *The Rationality of Feeling*, London 1992. The same link is drawn by Graham McFee in »Art, Beauty and the Ethical« (unpublished paper given in Antwerp 1996), whereas in »The Artistic and the Aesthetic« (unpublished paper given at the Annual Conference of the British Society of Aesthetics 1998), McFee firmly locates the aesthetic outside the domain of art arguing that »to attribute (merely) aesthetic properties to artworks is to misperceive them« [p. 2]. See also »Basic Concepts« in G. McFee *Understanding Dance*, London: Routledge 1992.

² M. C. Beardsley, *Aesthetics*, Indianapolis: Hackett 1980. Also Alfred Lessing, »What is Wrong with a Forgery?« in Dennis Dutton (ed.) *The Forger's Art*, Berkeley: University of California Press 1983 and R. Rudner »On Seeing What we Shall See« in R. Rudner and I. Scheffler (eds.) *Logic and Art: Essays in Honour of Nelson Goodman*, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill 1972.

readymade at the other extreme (that occupied by some advocates of the institutional theory)³.

My discussion is restricted in two ways: (a) by virtue of being preliminary in the sense that I focus on what I take to be the »prehistory« of the distinction, and (b) by being narrow in scope. The main part of the paper is therefore concerned with Beardsley's distinction between objective and genetic judgements and its supporting secondary distinctions. Beardsley's distinction amounts to a dichotomy between the aesthetic as perceptual and to a narrow conception of the artistic as genetic, referring to the artist in the terms of the doctrine of the Intentional Fallacy. The polarised, schematic way in which the objective and the genetic domain are separated in the context of this approach characterises also various subsequent attempts to separate the aesthetic and the artistic, in particular when the distinction is invoked in order to resolve the problem of forgeries, one of the so-called »puzzles of Aesthetics« whose formulation relies precisely on the conception of the aesthetic that is consequently invoked in order to dispel the confusion. Thus in the concluding part of my paper I will discuss briefly the problem of forgeries in relation to the distinction. In a sense, the paper remains inconclusive, so to speak, simply because the material I cover is highly selective in a biased way and thus perhaps insufficient in order to support the conclusion I would like to draw. This conclusion, which is implicitly present throughout my discussion, amounts to the expression of extreme skepticism with respect to the appropriateness of the concept of the aesthetic in defining the character of our appreciation of works of art. This line of thought supports the idea of our appreciation of works of art seen as exactly this, i.e. a holistic, well-integrated response whose character is art-historically, institutionally defined. On the other hand, a conclusion that can be supported by my material is that the sharp delineation of the aesthetic domain effected under the regime of considerations of purity leaves the aesthetic in a state of extreme impoverishment.

Beardsley's conception of the aesthetic object as it appears in his 1958 *Aesthetics* may sound dated today. However, the debate his theory of the aesthetic and the related anti-intentionalism stimulated is still very much alive. Moreover, his later, refined, theory of aesthetic experience and the aesthetic definition of art (involving the notion of an »aesthetic artwork« – a major concession to intentionalism) are still quite influential.

³ T. Binkley, »Piece: Contra Aesthetic« in J. Margolis (ed.) *Philosophy Looks at the Arts*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press 1977. For a discussion of the institutional theory leading to the distinction as a way of resolving what are considered to be its difficulties, see Carolyn Korsmeyer, »On Distinguishing Between Aesthetic and Artistic«, *The Journal of Aesthetic Education* 11 (1977) 45-57.

Going back to Beardsley's distinction between objective and genetic reasons (judgements), i.e. those that are genuinely attributed to the work itself and those that refer to the causes and conditions of the work and include not only psychological processes but also the physical processes that brought the work into being, I am not concerned with discarding, quite redundantly, an out-of-date distinction. Rather, I am trying to highlight the surprising (to me, at least) fact that the terms in which this distinction is conceived survive to some extent in later attempts to separate the aesthetic and the artistic. That is, although nobody would think of casting the artistic in Beardsley's simplistic terms, it is still thought of as something external to the work and it is often conceived in a schematic, polarised way. Which brings me to the second reason why I find it useful to look at Beardsley again, a reason that has to do with distinction-drawing strategies in general. For the objective/genetic distinction is supported by a number of other distinctions, some of them employing spatial metaphors like the distinction between internal and external characteristics of the aesthetic object which in their turn define what lies inside and what falls outside the domain of the aesthetic. There is also the distinction between veridical and illusory characteristics of the aesthetic object, i.e. those that rely on direct sensory awareness (the aesthetic object is after all defined as »a perceptual object«) as opposed to the latter that involve the »obscurity« of inference. My claim with respect to all the above is that Beardsley is not able to maintain the distinctness of the dichotomies he proposes and that this fact renders his approach incoherent. To see why this is so requires (a) making a preliminary point about translatability and (b) going through his list of genetic and objective reasons and structuring it somewhat by organising some of them in opposing pairs.

First, translatability. Beardsley's project of objective criticism is corrective in character aiming at reforming criticism and shaking off even the last traces of the intentional fallacy. In this context, he proposes a specific way of correcting critical judgements by recasting them in objective terms. This amounts to the principle of translatability of genetic to objective judgements. But the mere possibility of translatability, involving as it would, the transference of semantic content, unchanged (i.e. without any loss of meaning), from the domain of the genetic to that of the objective shows that the conceptual dichotomy between the two domains is not as rigid as Beardsley wants us to believe. For clearly, the meaning of the genetic statement would be preserved in the objective one. So are we dealing with a continuum rather than a distinction here?

The following observations should reinforce this impression. Thus returning to the pairs of critical terms, we find that: (i) the statement »art-

work x is well-organised« is accepted as an objective judgement as opposed to »x is skilful« which is condemned as genetic, and (ii) the notion of style is accepted as objective while »technique« is rejected. The sharp opposition between the terms in each antithetical pair however can be challenged once some additional considerations are introduced. This is what I will try to do now.

Thus starting with the first opposition: Beardsley's sharp opposition between »skilful«, construed as »being skilfully made« and hence involving the end-means terminology and thus ultimately being a hidden judgement about the producer rather than about the work, and »well-organised« as an acceptable »purely descriptive« judgement referring to the unity of the work is easily challenged by pointing out that the latter has equal claims to being construed as »x was organised in a very efficient manner« and thus involving the end-means terminology as well. This comes as no surprise: artworks are created according to some principle of organisation that functions as an ideal end to which various technical rules were employed as means. Artworks should be seen as products of intelligent action and this organising intelligence should always be inferred from their formal features.

But even after we discard the claim that 'skilful' is an attribute of the artist rather than the work, we are still left with an opposition. However, we can draw an analogy between those judgements that refer to the internal organisation of the work and a class of judgements that attribute skill on the basis of the correct application of technical rules. Thus »well-organised«, a structural property, and »skilful«, a technical one, can be construed in an analogous manner by reversing an argument that Stolnitz⁴ gives in an attempt to subsume artistic judgements under the broader genus of aesthetic ones. The argument draws a link between attributions of skill and making decisions and is useful in this context because decision-making is not unrelated to applying an organisational principle.

Stolnitz's argument regards attributions of skill applied to what Stolnitz refers to as »the perceptual content of music«, taking as his example the, highly conventionalised, we should note, genre of the sonata. Focusing on the statement S: »the transition at the recapitulation from the second subject to the first subject was skilfully made«, Stolnitz unfolds what he describes as S's »perceptual meaning«. Omitting the technicalities, it is enough to say that there exist a range of conventionally established alternative ways in which the transition can be effected. These vary from scale passages, i.e. simple acoustic fillers, to rather intriguing harmonic constructions based on

⁴ J. Stolnitz, »The Artistic Values in Aesthetic Experience«, *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 32 (1979) 5-15.

the interplay between the two themes. Since the transition follows at the end of the development of the second subject when the first subject returns, we are in a position, having listened so far, to anticipate the technical problem the composer is going to face. We can think of the various alternatives that are open to him. And yet, a technically perfect solution can still trigger our admiration as well as a reaction of surprise: this would qualify as a skilful solution.

In other words, the tactical move that Stolnitz resorts to here is to place the perceiver in the composer's position and enforce upon him the problem-situation that the composer is confronting. This amounts, for him, to a case of aesthetic enjoyment of the art-making activity. Thus listening to the work becomes a kind of composing it and, we may add, also the other way around, composing is a kind of listening. The distinctness of the two activities is blurred as listening emerges as a cognitive exercise we engage in by reconstructing the composer's problem.

The point that needs to be made however is that this reconstruction often has to be far more elaborate than the fill-in-the-gap situation that Stolnitz envisages. And here I can only refer you to Michael Baxandall's excellent discussion of the technical problems that Picasso and Braque encountered and the solutions they provided each other with.⁵ The implications of the possibility of such intricate reconstructions are far-reaching and my time-constraints make it impossible to unravel them here. It is however enough, for the purposes of my argument, to retain the point that by narrowing down the genetic, hence artistic, and opening up the aesthetic, all on the common basis of a construal that would employ the idea of a reconstruction of the creative process even if this is recast as merely a series of choices between a range of alternatives, we see how the aesthetic and the artistic interpermeate each other.

A different argument leading to the same conclusion can be construed with respect to the second antithetical pair that I singled out above, that is, style and technique. This would involve reforming the notion of style as employed by Beardsley by opening it up and unfolding its construal into a discussion of technique. Beardsley defines style as »the recurrent features in the texture or structure of a painting«. This amounts to a narrow formal definition which reduces style to a statistical matter of counting repetitive patterns. The theoretical debate on style,⁶ however, is organised around two major conceptions of style: (a) style as a matter of human disposition toward

⁵ *Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures*, New Haven: Yale University Press 1985.

⁶ See Berel Lang (ed.), *The Concept of Style*, Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press 1987.

action⁷ and (b) style as a matter of choice among constraints set by the history of art or by artistic technique.⁸ What both approaches share in common is the idea that some reference to the artist, either direct or implicit, cannot be eliminated.

Reforming, as I put it earlier, Beardsley's conception of style would involve asking how stylistic traits contribute to the work's unity, how they function together. In other words, it would amount to considering the stylistic traits' organic function within the aesthetic object. This would involve invoking a background of alternatives in a way similar to the analysis of skilful above. Thus the formalistic definition of style would unfold itself into a discussion of the, unacceptably genetic, according to Beardsley, notion of technique.

What is now required is an argument in the opposite direction that would recast »technique« in terms of the technical details involved in the production of the work and show how many of them directly determine our perception. This argument is twofold: it involves construing technique as (i) related to technical characteristics (the choice of materials), and (ii) as referring to technical rules that were employed in the process of making the picture.

The first part of the argument relies on the idea that certain materials are more appropriate than others in rendering a certain aesthetic effect, thus treating attributions of aesthetic effect, such as e.g. »delicate« as category-relative. Noting that such terms are objective for Beardsley, this possibility leads us to the following situation: we have an aesthetic term that refers to the form of the painting and whose paradigmatic use is to be found within a category of paintings that are classified as such by virtue of the materials employed in producing them; thus our case amounts to an objective aesthetic term whose use is partly determined by a non-objective characteristic.

Furthermore, and moving on now to the second leg of the argument, contra Beardsley, technical rules may govern our perception, esp. in cases where naturalism withdraws and the perceptual content of the work requires deciphering of an intensely cognitive character. The obvious example comes from cubism: a number of cubist devices or, otherwise, »modes of abstraction« were employed with the specific aim »to represent reality as perceived«,⁹ that is from all perspectives. They involved, for example, the frag-

⁷ Cf. Wollheim's claim that style has psychological reality, see »Pictorial Style: Two Views« in Lang (ed.)

⁸ A definition along these lines is given by Leonard Meyer in »Towards a Theory of Style« in Lang (ed.), p. 21.

⁹ For a very illuminating discussion of this point see Harold Osborne »Cubism, Cezanne and Perceptual Realism« in his *Abstraction and Artifice in Twentieth Century Art*, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1979.

mentation of objects, the analysis of their volumes into various types of abstract forms suggestive of their three-dimensionality, the combination of different views of the same object (in profile, frontally, in elevation, in section) etc. These devices, which are all matters of technique, hold the key to our deciphering the representational content of cubist paintings; in fact, artistic factors though they may be, they determine our correct perceptual experience of the works. Thus now that the genetic/artistic attribution of technique has taken us back to the aesthetic/perceptual experience of the work/aesthetic object the inversion of the categories has been effected.

The key tactical moves involved in this whole transition from the aesthetic to the artistic and back consisted in (a) hypothesising about the alternative technical solutions open to the artist and (b) reconstructing the process of the work's production. These strategies lead us to posit the figure of an apparent artist, a theoretical construction having the function of a unifying principle. This conclusion would be sufficient to undermine the watertight distinction between the aesthetic and the artistic as it appears in Beardsley although the apparent artist is not a sufficient methodological tool for the purposes of a more developed philosophy of art since apparent process and actual production may diverge esp. in cases that involve elements of forging (either a forged aesthetic effect or full-scale forgeries).¹⁰

The figure of the apparent artist is invoked in order to help illustrate the idea that »we see in the work the action of producing it«.¹¹ In both kinds of cases mentioned above, however, and perhaps more interestingly in those that I described as cases of forged aesthetic effect, such as Monet's rapid brushstrokes that turn out to be carefully and meticulously worked out through thick layers of underpainting with just about zero real spontaneity about them, the apparent artist is not a sufficient methodological tool anymore. Such cases show that we need to move on from the idea of »apparent process« to that of »reconstructed real process«. Now the claim that we see in the work the action of producing it is stretched to its limits operating as a constraint on our reconstructions. In some cases, this amounts to the claim that there is nothing in what we see that contradicts the reconstruction of the artistic process as this has been effected with the help of means that lie outside the work: art-historical evidence, for example. Elsewhere, it has the

¹⁰ My example of what I refer to as a »forged aesthetic effect« relies on Rosalind Krauss' deconstruction of Monet's brushstrokes in »The Originality of the Avant-Garde« in *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths*, Cambridge Mass. : M. I. T. Press 1994.

¹¹ See Kendall Walton, »Style and the Products and Processes of Art« in Lang (ed.), p. 81.

less problematic meaning that we discern the artistic action in the work after we have reached a full account of that action because the visual evidence available was inconclusive.

These last remarks represent a major advance in our discussion so far. In other words, up to this point my main concern was to refute Beardsley's dichotomies simply by showing that the aesthetic and the genetic/artistic interpermeate each other. This was sufficient as far as Beardsley's approach goes but it may seem that in doing so, I am leaving open the possibility of construing the aesthetic and the artistic in terms of the genus-species model, subsuming the one under the other. My ultimate aim however was to show that the artistic on its own is fully adequate to cope with the requirements that the appreciation of art poses. Thus by expanding the artistic into the grey area between that and the aesthetic, I do not intend to make it an overarching concept but rather the only concept that is appropriate in order to describe our appreciation of art.

Having said this, I can now conclude with some final remarks pertaining to the problem of forgeries. The discussion of forgeries is centered around the rather artificial paradox of the original and its perceptually indistinguishable fake, a problem which is often resolved in a facile manner by resorting to the distinction between the aesthetic and the artistic. It is then argued that such identical paintings would differ in artistic value but would be equal in terms of aesthetic value.

This kind of reply has the disadvantage that it legitimizes the paradox by endorsing the possibility of perceptual indistinguishability between paintings as a genuine possibility. Still, let us resist the temptation to continue the argument along the lines of proving that the whole paradox of perceptual indistinguishability is a non-starter and let us go along with it. According to some proponents of the distinction, this paradox is dissolved by employing the terms of the distinction in the following way: the aesthetic is defined as pertaining to the visual qualities of the picture, i.e. the »actual« properties that are exemplified by the canvas itself. The artistic is seen as completely external to the work belonging to the domain of criticism or art history. This approach, defended among others by Tomas Kulka,¹² is further enriched with a quantitative, school-textbook style model of measuring the aesthetic and the artistic value in a work in a scale from 0 to 10, and with additional links of the aesthetic to the pleasing and the beautiful. And it is precisely this kind of argument that led me to claim earlier that the terms in which

¹² T. Kulka, »The Artistic and the Aesthetic Value of Art«, *British Journal of Aesthetics* 21(1981) 336-350 and »The Artistic and Aesthetic Status of Forgeries«, *Leonardo* 15 (1982) 115-117.

Beardsley casts his objective/genetic distinction survive in the aesthetic/artistic distinction as it is commonly used. For what are regarded as art-historical factors, such as originality or authenticity, are seen as so external to the work that they end up in the same league as the artist's biography. Once again we have to put up with the internal/external dichotomy.

The conclusion I draw from all the above can be summarised as follows: there is a genuine distinction between the concept of the aesthetic and that of the artistic but their respective domains of application are very different from what they are usually taken to be, that is, the distinction can be made out with precision only if the aesthetic is to be excluded from the domain of art.¹³ It is of course possible, despite this, to insist that an original artwork and an identical looking fake have equal aesthetic value but we would only be able to secure that at a very heavy price: neither of them would then be seen as a work of art. Such an implication runs contrary to the whole spirit of attributions of aesthetic value. And even if it appears as appealing to those who are inclined not to regard fakes as art, it has the disastrous consequence that the fake »takes down with it«, so to speak, the original artwork as well. This way we end up with an artwork that is regarded as non-art, i.e. as a mere perceptual surface.¹⁴

¹³ For a similar conclusion arising out of different concerns see McFee, *op. cit.* My concerns in following McFee's radical line are much narrower, i. e. seeing the artistic in terms of the technical and the institutional.

¹⁴ I would like to thank Graham McFee for useful discussions on a number of occasions as well as for allowing me to see his unpublished work on the artistic and the aesthetic.

G.W. Trompf
Post-Modernism as Decadence
On Aesthetics and the Philosophy of History

En route to the Ljubljana conference, and as yet unsure what to present to it, I made for an historic library at the Stift Klosterneuburg, Austria. My taxi was blocked from delivering me, however, since I was entering the sacred city of St Leopold and the Babenberg house on the day that half its bodily upright inhabitants engaged in a mass running race from its precincts to the centre. I smiled. The competitors were all expensively clad in athletic outfits to disprove »in the long run« what the European originator of this »fitness enthusiasm« had first alarmingly bellowed: that Westerners were in danger of physical, let alone cultural, »Degeneration«. I refer of course to the well-known Jewish, indeed Zionist polemicist Max Nordau, who should be rather better remembered for writing a very widely read volume – *Entartung* (1892) – about the socio-cultural condition of the West *à la fin du siècle*, at the end of the last century.¹

An early summary statement in that volume speaks loudly of Nordau's assessments. What, he asks, does the *fin-de-siècle* phenomenon amount to in his time?

It means a practical emancipation from traditional discipline, which theoretically is still in force. To the voluptuary this means unbridled lewdness, the unchaining of the beast in man; to the withered heart of the egoist, disdain of all consideration for his fellow-men, the trampling under foot of all barriers which enclose brutal greed of lucre and lust of pleasure; to the contemner of the world it means the shameless ascendancy of base impulses and motives, which were, if not virtuously suppressed, at least hypocritically hidden; to the believer it means the repudiation of dogma, the negation of a super-sensuous world, the descent into flat phenomenalism; to the sensitive nature yearning for aesthetic thrills, it means the vanishing of ideals in art, and no more power in its accepted forms to arouse emotion. And to all, it means the end of an established order, which for thousands of years has satisfied logic, fettered depravity, and in every art matured something of beauty.

One epoch of history is unmistakably in its decline, and another is announcing its approach. There is a sound of rending in every tradition,

¹ For background, especially S. Avineri, *The Making of Modern Zionism* (New York: Harper, 1981), ch. 10.

and it is as though the morrow would not link itself with to-day. Things as they are totter and plunge, ... because man is weary, and there is no faith that it is worth an effort to uphold them...

The great majority of the middle and lower classes is naturally not *fin-de-siècle* ... The Philistine and the Proletarian still finds undiluted satisfaction in the old and oldest forms of art and poetry, if he knows himself unwatched by the scornful eye of the votary of fashion... It is only a very small minority who honestly find pleasure in the new tendencies... But this minority has the gift of covering the whole visible surface of society, as a little oil extends over a large area of the surface of the sea... And thus it appears as if the whole of civilized humanity were converted to the aesthetics of the Dusk of the Nations.²

The question compels; have matters changed? or, colloquially, »so what's new?« Genuine pejorists and uninformatarians, of course, will have already constrained us from expecting anything better from most times. That reminds me, I did eventually get into the Stift Bibliothek, only to be depressed by the past. I worked on a late sixteenth century Latin text by Juan de Mariana about the history of Spain from her origins to the reign of Philip II. Covering page after page of the turbulence, intrigue and venality, however, all preventing the outcome of a united Spain until nearer his own time, the liberal Jesuit is left gasping for a breath of explanation (and his continuator had to face the signs of Spain's decline following the failed, fabled Armada). The nearest de Mariana could come to a covering principle – a rather pessimistic one – is that humans are caught in an eternally conditioned web of causes from which they never really extract themselves and which the ancient Stoics called fate.³ Perhaps this may resign us to expect »more of the same« too concessively, for after all, there have always been voices of lament over social dilapidations through the ages, as the clanging of bells to slightly different tunes. Yet it is hardly a matter lacking interest that some very important intellectuals in our time are sounding notes very like Nordau's, in the twentieth century West's *fin-de-siècle*, *fin-de-millénium* situation.

Consider two recent and related treatises. One is by Ernst Gellner on the affects of cultural and existential relativism as indicative of the post-modernist condition: for him we are reaping expressions of fundamental-

² The Nordau edition used: *Degeneration* (Heinemann's Empire Library of Standard Works 1) (London: Heinemann, 1895), pp. 5-7.

³ J. Mariana, *Historiae de rebus Hispaniae libri triginta* (ed. and add. J. E. Miniana) (The Hague: Hag. Comit., 1731 edn.), vol. 2, p. 377 (Bk. XX, 16). On pejorism, uniformitarianism, etc., G. W. Trompf, *The Idea of Historical Recurrence in Western Thought* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1979), vol. 1, pp. 110-12, 248, 291-5, etc.

ist certainty as a reaction, together with the loss of faith in ideal beauty and truth as a symptom of perplexing times.⁴ The other is very recent, and a daring attempt at a general history of Truth by Felipe Fernandez-Armesto, eminent author of *The Millennium*. He decided that, given the yawning gap, the West desperately required such an account, which includes tracing apprehensions of beauty, because a paradoxical combination of consumerism, pluralism and faddish intellectual trends are making it increasingly difficult to hold to any such profundities.⁵ Macrohistorically speaking, both analysts smell the corrupting of old socio-cultural cohesions.

Between the brilliance of late Victorian England, or Dionysian Vienna, or Gustave Moreau's Paris, down to our own time there have been more than enough traumas, indeed global ones, to make the discourse of decadence continually viable, even world-wide, in its force. Somewhere in the chronological middle W.B. Yeats summed it up poetically.

Turning and turning in the widening gyre,
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, whilst the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.⁶

And I am now beginning to ask myself, on your behalf in this context, whether »the beast« he imagined slouching »towards Bethlehem to be born« was: post-modernism. Or perhaps I should specify »the post-modernist condition«, because in a short space I will obviously have to disentangle concepts and terminology, in fact a lot of semantic confusion.

I mean, I honestly cannot pinpoint the origins of post-modernity as a complex cultural trajectory. Each aesthetic and intellectual sphere will have to be revisited time and again to unravel that special issue. I am obviously more immediately concerned with post-War figures self-designating as minds reacting against the so-called »Enlightenment Project«, taken by them as axial modernity. A curiosity arises for me at this stage of the argument in that I have remained immensely challenged and mentally invigorated by the great protagonists for the post-modern – Lacan, Derrida, Foucault, Irigaray,

⁴ Gellner, *Postmodernism, Reason and Religion* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), esp. chs. 1-3, 5.

⁵ Fernandez-Armesto, *Truth: a history* (London: Bantam, 1997), esp. chs. 5-6 cf. *The Millennium: a history of our last one thousand years* (London: Bantam, 1995).

⁶ Yeats, »The Second Coming« (1926) in *Collected Poems* (London: Macmillan 1958 edn.), p. 211

Jameson, and the like. Quite often I feel as disjointed and as ontically lonely as Octavio Paz. I also revel somewhat in the imagic transformations of quirkish post-modern art, although the list of captivating *Gestalten* would be too inordinate to present here: Mark Kostabi's Princess Diana as virginal Madonna, a clothed Kate Moss as a beauty model posing in a feminist take-off of Manet's »Breakfast on the Green« with two male nudes, and so on.⁷ Why, I have to admit, I did not get aggravated enough to protest Andres Serrano's »Piss Christ«, let alone become implicated in the theft of Tania Kovat's »Virgin in a Condom« from the Sydney Museum of Contemporary Art.⁸ Like most of the people reading this paper I have to learnt to place such »developments« in the world of aesthetics (which I concede could actually enervate one into a »lack of cultural conviction«), even if I do reserve the right to lament, as I believe you would, what I sense to be »monumentally bad taste«, or, to put a contentious matter cautiously, what is »unconscionably uglifying«.⁹

But here I stand as a scholarly cultural symptomatologist; and in my ongoing work on *The Idea of Historical Recurrence* in Western, and now more and more non-Western thought, I become increasingly familiar with the reflective »sign reading« or »semeiology« of civilizational corruption, decay, decline, degeneration, *decadenza*, *Untergang*, even disintegration. All sorts of interesting things come out of comparative symptomatologies in relation to aesthetics. Pursue but one small avenue for an impression. Well before Theodor Adorno's analyses of mass culture, for instance, or our very own Arnold Berleant's resiling over the world's »Disneyfication«, Albert Schweitzer intuited one of the best indices for *The Decay of Civilization* to be the modern billboard.¹⁰ Pace my own uncle, Percy Trompf, who was clearly one of the world's greatest billboard painters, there is a lot to this assessment. You just have to travel in the central Canadian countryside, where the

⁷ I refer to Kostabi's 'The Sanctification of Virtue' (1997). For the latter case, see W. Klauser, »Das Model und die alten Meister: Kate Moss posiert in der neuern YSL-Kampagne nach historischen Vorbildern«, *Gala* 35/4 (Aug. 1998): 30-1. This ploy can obviously be taken too far, as in the string of 'spoofs' on paintings in the great tradition of the West by the Australian painter Brett Whiteley.

⁸ For the latter altercation, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 Oct., 1997: 1.

⁹ Here I preempt issues being raised in F. Speed's work in Aesthetics and Philosophy, »The Physics of Ugliness« (Doctoral dissert., University of Lancaster), Lancaster (forthcoming).

¹⁰ Cf. Schweitzer, *The Decay and Restoration of Civilization* (trans. C. T. Champion) (London: Unwin, 1961), cf. Adorno, *Ästhetische Theorie* (eds. G. Adorno and R. Tiedemann) (Frankfurt, Suhrkamp, 1974 edn.); Berleant, *The Aesthetics of Environment* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992).

wretched things are banned from the landscape, to *see* the point. And now, of course, billboards are becoming trendily post-modernistic, so that even today in this very city of Ljubljana, »beautifully decadent« as it is, we have a monumental mini-piece of bad taste, with two crying so-called »Siamese« twins advertising a Pop group.

But I suppose here we have to take stock of what is being meant by decadence, since there is as much a need to dispell confusion in its connection as with post-modernity. Let us begin with nineteenth century France, with notions and artistic articulations of decadence yielding a kind of *locus classicus*, in the nineties, in that *fin-de-siècle* ambience Nordau sought to diagnose. There, with Gustave Moreau and the »dreamers of decadence«, as Philippe Jullian introduces them, we find a kind of sickly poignancy that we sometimes still hear in more occult art circles. It entailed the conceit that

Those who see Beauty in their eyes
Are condemned to death, and
Can serve no purpose on the earth.
*Wer die Schönheit angeschaut mit Augen.*¹¹

The processes in French decadence theory, intriguingly, appear to run from an earlier mourning over the loss of cultural cohesion and moral fabric on to this kind of *accepting* indulgence.¹²

Of course focussing on that *fin-de-siècle* situation could bring up various difficulties in terms of paralleling the condition of early *décadence* with post-modernity. Certainly, we could take Charles Baudelaire as the great mid-century French poetic harbinger of the later decadence, and recognize in his disdain for his own times a rejection of modernity and its mediocrity. »Je deviens tellement l'ennemi de mon siècle.« The trouble is, however, he himself rejected decadence as a literary label, and his intimate friends knew of him that he completely accepted »l'homme moderne«, and that he was a »modernist« in the sense that he »preferred the artificiality and corruption of a decaying society to the more robust virtues of less degenerate civilizations«. ¹³

¹¹ Juillian, *Dreamers of Decadence: symbolist painters of the 1890s* (London: Phaidon, 1971), [p. 6 on the quoted 'Tristan' by A. Graf von Platen] *et passim*. Cf. (recently) L. Ingrisch, *Das Leben beginnt mit dem Tod* (Vienna: Verlag Österreich, 1997).

¹² K. W. Swart, *The Sense of Decadence in Nineteenth-Century France* (Archives Internationales d'Histoire des Idées 7) (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1964), ch. 6.

¹³ Baudelaire, *Correspondance générale* (eds. J. Crépet and C. Pichols) [in *Oeuvres complètes*] (Paris: Conrad, 1947-53 edn.), vol. 4, p. 99 (first quotation); Théodore de Banville (1867), quoted in A.E. Carter, *The Idea of Decadence in French Literature* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1958), pp. 55-6 (second): Swart, *op. cit.*, p. 114, cf. p. 116.

Thus it is that tricky issues spring to light for one who would link post-modernity and decadence in our own latter-day context, when meanings and values put upon human developments can very easily slip from one side of the interpreter's anvil to another. Why, amid post-War uncertainties of the Western bloc's future, did not the French political theorist Raymond Aron deem it respectable to defend a »decadent Europe«, if it meant that she happened to combine instability and the richness of civilization against the culturally-stable military powerful societies?¹⁴ Then there is the imputation, obviously begging attention, that decadence is a modern/modernist condition. After all, if, as many tacitly deem him, Nietzsche was the first of the philosophic post-modernists, how resounding are his evocations against »the [current] decadents«, although one admits this only by also conceding that his views are highly idiosyncratic. Europe's *Untergang* is for Nietzsche extraordinarily deep-inured, a long-term wastedness reaped from imbibing Socratic metaphysics and Christian *slavische Morale*.¹⁵ He denounces at a time, though, when others can use him as legitimation for indulging in death, or succumbing to neo-pagan temptations, and flout the rational *Aufklärung*.¹⁶

Nietzsche's peculiar orientations and context aside, it remains palpable that acclaimed protagonists of post-modernity through the last generation have set themselves up as analysts of decadence, which inevitably entails them pronouncing over the inadequacies and demise of the modern. Consider Jacques Lacan handling the *malaise de la civilisation*, or Michel Foucault's diagnosis of Western humanity as the product of totalizing structures, both institutional and intellectual.¹⁷ And such scholars are good at guarding their own backs by evading the implication that, in deconstructing traditionalist and Enlightenment procedures for organizing societies, they may be part of the problem of decline they believe they comprehend. That last matter is the suspicion, to return to very recent critics, of Gellner and

¹⁴ Aron, »My Defence of our Decadent Europe«, *Encounter* 49/3 (1977): esp. 29.

¹⁵ Nietzsche, *The Twilight of the Idols* [1889] (trans. R. J. Hollingdale), Harmondsworth, 1968, esp. pp. 32-4, 39, 43, 45-6, etc.

¹⁶ Cf., e.g., W. J. McGrath, *Dionysian Art and Populist Politics in Austria* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1974); Jullian, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-4, 164.

¹⁷ For guidance, P. G. Guéguen, »Lacan and the Malaise of Civilization« (Seminar paper, Melbourne Centre for Psychoanalytic Research and the Department of General Philosophy, University of Sydney, 3 Aug., 1993) (Sydney, 1993); D. Eribon, *Foucault* (trans. R. Wing) (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991).

¹⁸ Start with S. Morawski, *The Troubles with Postmodernism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), cf. B. Fetz and K. Kastberger (eds.), *Der literarische Einfall* (Profile 1/1998) (Vienna: Profile, 1998 (on literature in particular)).

Fernandez-Armesto; and it seems built into the reactions of the »New Aesthetics« as well.¹⁸

Yes, even post-modernist decadence theorists can be very much part of the Western predicament. If influential provocative and profound-looking questions are ever asked of any encyclopaedic-globalist kind about »where we are at« – and most well known post-modernist thinkers hardly eschew macroscopic evaluations¹⁹ – we would be foolish not to consider seriously: »by whom« and »for whom« are these questions being put? Take one of the most fetching statements of perhaps the most gifted contemporary American post-modernist rhetoricians Frederic Jameson. »Never in any previous civilization«, he asserts, »have the great metaphysical preoccupations, the fundamental questions of being and the meaning of life, seemed so utterly remote and pointless« (and he means aesthetic ideals as well).²⁰ This seems like a sound recognition of a depleted sense of absolutes and the problem of the paradoxically subjectivist closure (which reactivates Gellner and Fernandez-Armesto also cunningly identify); but for Jameson the new condition is the making of a philosophical agenda. And one must ask »by whom?« and »for whom?«, first, because the broad claim only makes sense in a very limited Western(ized) intellectual forum, and second, because for the overwhelming part of global humanity – and I say this as a published comparative ethnohistorian – Jameson's statement is nonsense. Actually never before have so many people been posing traditional (and strikingly Western-looking) questions of Ultimacy and Existence than in our own time, and yet been so ill-deserved by irresponsibly jargonistic and culture-bound philosophical »sets« in the West.

The general implication of the argument has been looming enough. It is now necessary for philosophers and aestheticians to recapture basic and more traditional apprehensions of decadence while faced with the intellectual turbulence and conceptual muddles under our very noses. A sound philosophy of history in particular can hardly let the self-inscriptions of modernists, post-modernists and the like close them off from access to the extraordinary wealth of Western reflection on the causes of cultural demise developed through many ages. The Western tradition as an untruncated continuum waits to be tapped for truths and warnings. Admittedly some traditional models can drag entirely new sets of problems in their train. It is a shared value old military realists from Sallust through Machiavelli and

¹⁹ Start with F. Rella, *The Myth of the Other* (PostModern Positions 7), (trans. N. Moe) (Washington DC.: Maïssonneuve, 1994).

²⁰ Quoted in the introduction to R.P. Scharlemann (ed.) *Theology at the End of the Century* (Charlottesville and London, University Press of Virginia, 1990), p. 14.

beyond, for example, that societies enjoying too much external peace will dissipate their energies in luxuriating expressions of internal achievement, and both competing voices of theoretic discourse and aesthetic impetus, on this reading, will reflect and partly generate a threatening social dissonance (as they do now).²¹ The new *problématique* entailed here, I hasten to point out, is that social health only comes by a fostering a sufficiently strong degree of external aggression, which is a more persuasive stance than most contemporary philosophers and aestheticians would like to recognize, and rather too »close to the bone« when one considers the resurgence of ethnic nationalism next to Slovenia and the over-readiness of a hegemonic United States to intrude into the Yugoslav region! The arresting and enduring external/internal paradigm has to be noted, nonetheless, as part of the rich repertory available to any traditionalist who wants to fathom the connected lakes of symptomatologies (ancient, »Occidental«, even Eastern), and thus develop a more balanced perspective on our current dilemmas.

Among the many aetiologies, one more pertinent and carrying less political burden concerns interests, that when private interests decidedly outweigh public ones, a society enters *decadenza*. This was an important insight of the Scottish Enlightenment,²² yet it has obvious twentieth century relevance. By the significant year 1918 the American sociologist Edward Alsworth Ross repeated the dictum, with the supplementary notion that »decay sets in after the we-feeling [corporateness of a people] has died«. He also gathered up the complex French story of *décadence* into a covering statement of more conventional wisdom.

Late in the last century the French passed through such a critical epoch, during which artists relentlessly dissected, not only all elements of religious faith, but, as well, all moral, social, and civic ideals. The result was a movement of unbridled individualism culminating in a widespread moral disorganization, the symptoms of which were so plain early in the nineties that the French got the repute for being a »decadent« and negligent people. About this time the group sense of self-preservation took alarm, the intellectuals realized that negativism had gone too far, and

²¹ Sallust, *Catil*, ii, 1-iii, 2; N. Machiavelli, *Istorie Fiorentine* (Rome: Blado, 1532), V, 1.

²² [A. Ferguson, »Essai sur l'histoire de la société civile«, in (G. Deyverdun and E. Gibbon eds.), *Mémoires littéraires de la Grande Bretagne pour l'an 1767* (London: n.p., 1767), esp. p. 68.

²³ (Although Ross resorts to the external/internal classical model by affirming that France's rebirth of solidarity was nowhere better illustrated than during the War!). Ross, »Social Decadence«, *The American Journal of Sociology* 23/5 (1918): 6328-9, cf. 631 (earlier quotation).

there was a reaction in the direction of the building up of sound ideals in the rising generation.²³

The awareness of the pitfalls in (over-, hyper-) critical theories and their disorganizing effects is strikingly relevant for the late 1990s;²⁴ the notification that intellectuals and the creative *avant-garde* do and can actually intuit that they have gone too far (or become irresponsible) is momentous. The intelligentsia, hopefully the least culturally forgetful lot in society, are supposed to be teachers, not nihilists. They do what they do so that others learn, and if, latterly, they are coming to abandon tradition in this sense, never will their social vacuousness have presented itself so terribly. Alexander Solzhenitsyn made a related point, in his Nobel Speech, about the passage of Art (even but »one word of Truth«) from one country to another. He had Eastern Europe on his mind in maintaining that art from one context can perhaps save a »second nation ... from taking an unnecessary, mistaken or even ruinous path ... Art can straighten the twisted paths of man's history«.²⁵ But at the bare minimum one has to defer to the basic tradition that Cultural Artculaters *do* teach (even if some ostensibly spurn the didactic), and what they pass on will either aid the world constructively, or misdirect it in lessons it can ill afford.

The »traditionist« position I hereby espouse (and it is not traditionalism or reactive conservatism)²⁶ involves a call to blunt the heavy accentuation of a contest between the Modern and Post-Modern, and engage with the extraordinary scope of the Western tradition as a whole (including its various interfaces with other socio-cultural zones). It is going to be the broadly-based capacity to tap various and relevant resources from far Antiquity up to the immediate present that will count for our future.²⁷ It is hardly going to be productive for global survival just to »kill off the Enlightenment Project« and read books published only after 1985. The positive reorientation, indeed, will involve deliberately avoiding misreadings of the world that lack depth, though they have come to have such surprising, if superficial,

²⁴ For the close connection between critical theory and postmodernism, e.g., M. Poster, *Critical Theory of the Family* (London: Pluto, 1978).

²⁵ Solzhenitsyn, 'One Word of Truth ...' (The Nobel Speech on Literature 1970) (London: Bodley Head, 1972), pp. 14-15.

²⁶ Thus Trompf, »Croce and Collingwood on Primitive Classical Aesthetics«, *Literature and Aesthetics* 7 (1997): 131-6.

²⁷ In aesthetics, E.H. Gombrich has set a useful tone for the future by avoiding as many arbitrary periodizations as possible, cf. R. Woodfield (ed.), *The Essential Gombrich* (London: Phaidon, 1996). On architecture, note intelligent conclusions by D. Erskine, »Democratic Architecture«, in D. Lasdun (ed.), *Architecture in an Age of Scepticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), p. 73.

influence over a mass of people who do not understand them, like »a little oil«extending »over a large area of the surface of the sea«.

Which brings my to point of a daring pedagogy, in conclusion, that circumstances are fast compelling aestheticians who have not lost their social conscience and educative sensibilities to make a mature deference towards pertinent social scientific (or »social studies«) insights. To cope with, and avoid entrapment in, what is sapping our vitals and wishing us away into an indulgent cultural narcissism and a defrauded spirituality, we need to do some »sociology of knowledge and aesthetics« to discover and plot just how rampant is the disjunction between Western intellectual or creative life and the world's social and environmental needs. There is too much in post-modernism that is despairingly irrelevant and irresponsible *vis-à-vis* the Third or Two-Thirds World. The extent of jargonism and the increasing lack of communicability have been clear symptoms of the disease. Aesthetic impoverishment in the West has been bad enough: for, outside the photographic (and the »domestic-mediocre« genre), the landscape has all but dropped out of painting, with nature rendered apparently boring. Recovering continuity, or retracing humanity's ideas and techniques along the long »Rhodian Shore« has become a matter of imperative, as against wrecking the (cultural) dunes and paranoically always spotting dung in the water.²⁸

We need to train ourselves in basic anthropology as well, to pinpoint that all too frequently appearing »intellectual set«, especially among post-graduate students, calling themselves post-modernists (in America often being dubbed or self-inscribing as »pomos«). I write as an experienced fieldworker, and *inter alia* as a well-seasoned traveller from one campus to another. I can only confirm what many fellow academics report around the Western world: on a burgeoning of disaffected, arrogant, jargonistic, dogmatic, self-consciously troublemaking and everdispleased coterie of young people who, as »second-generation imbibers« of post-modernism, I have to imagine being among the intellectual leaders of the future. Perhaps I am getting old, but I expected better; and I look longingly to a newer and more inspiring breed: a »new Man«. To combine post-Nietzschean aggravation with post-post-modernism, I presume to direct the future with a bold gesture: *Ecce homo. Exit pomo.*

²⁸ See C. Glacken, *Traces on the Rhodian Shore: nature and culture in Western thought from ancient times to the end of the Eighteenth Century* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1976 edn.), cf. C. Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism: American life in an Age of diminishing expectations* (New York and London: Norton, 1979).

Zhou Laixiang
My Harmonious Aesthetics and Philosophy

Since the 1960s, starting from the simplest proposition that beauty is harmony, I have inquired into the history of aesthetic categories, and surveyed the historical process in the germination, development, fission and transmutation of every concrete pattern of beauty (and art), from the study of the highest potentially complete and rich perceptual objects of logical analysis of abstract dialectical reason, and from the unfolding of the giant abstract thinking route to the concrete logic of the transformation of history; here I have summarized this route.

The direct perception tells us that in the colourful boundless universe everything is in everlasting motion; nothing is absolutely static, everything is moving. There exists neither static eternal beauty, nor eternal art, nor eternal aesthetics, but only motional beauty, motional art and motional aesthetics. There exists neither abstract general beauty, nor general art, nor general aesthetics; there are only historically particular beauty, particular art and particular aesthetics. Abstract general beauty, general art and general aesthetics exist only in abstract thinking; but grasping them in knowledge, the thinking abstraction should further raise to thinking particularity. Therefore, I think, in ancient times there existed ancient beauty, ancient art and ancient aesthetics; in modern times there is modern beauty, modern art and modern aesthetics; in contemporary times there is contemporary beauty, contemporary art and contemporary aesthetics. The eras have changed, therefore beauty is different, as is art and aesthetics.

I disagree with the viewpoints which regard beauty and art as two separate entities, for I think they only differ in matter and consciousness, but are identical in their contradictory nature and structural principle. For this reason the essence of beauty and the aesthetic essence of art, as well as the historical formation of beauty and the historical formation of art are identical; the analysis of beauty virtually contains the analysis of art, for beauty and the intrinsic quality of art merge into an organic whole. The analysis of ancient harmonious art resembles my analysis of ancient harmonious beauty: in essence they are in perfect correspondence. The analysis of modern sublimity and sublime realism and romanticism, of ugliness and modernist art, the analysis of absurdity and of post-modernism, and the analysis of dialectical

harmonious beauty and socialist art are all like this, without exception. For the same reason that aesthetics is the logical summary of beauty and art, ancient aesthetics is an aesthetics of simple and unadorned beauty; modern aesthetics is aesthetics of the sublime, and contemporary aesthetics is aesthetics of dialectical harmony. The objects and contents of the study of aesthetics have developed along with the development of history, being different in each era. Aesthetics in the general sense, will be a condensed mastery of the long process of history.

Ancient beauty (and art) is a simple and unadorned harmonious beauty; it is its contradictory quality and structural characteristics that make all the elements of beauty (and art) constitute an organic whole in a sequential, stable, balanced and harmonious way. But the long river of history, sometimes fortells rapids and dangerous shoals, sometimes emphasizes the weakened wind and subsided waves; analogously the harmonious whole also presents the continuous development from the majestic via the graceful to the sublime. Majesty, grace and sublimity in the embryonic stage are the three forms of development of ancient harmonious beauty. But in ancient times, the sublime exists only in the stage of germination, in an immature form; strictly speaking, it was not until the modern day that it differentiated into an independent category. For this reason the essential forms of ancient harmony are majesty and grace. »Zhuangmei« (majesty) emphasizes the contradictory opposition, while »youmei« (grace) emphasizes the mutual complementation and permeation of contradiction. But both of them have not broken through the ancient harmonious circle; the powerful and the free of Su Shi (1037-1101) and Xin Qiji (1140-1207), and the subtle and concise of Yan Jidao (c.1030-c.1106) and Liu Yong (c.1004-c.1054), although they are »Yanggang« (masculine) and »Yinrou« (feminine), are the beautiful. In this sense, all the ancient arts are beautiful arts; the whole of ancient culture is aesthetic culture. It is suited to the ancient agricultural society of undivided subject-object, »zhonghe« (medium) cultural tradition, the simple and the unadorned thinking mode of dialectics, and the psychological structure of the ancient people. There was no complete separation between the ancient subject and object, for they both still existed in simple and unadorned harmonious relations. The ancient culture stresses the wholeness of the subject-object interdependence, and mutual complementation and transformation; man and nature are friends, and individuals merge in the community. These are the ancient characteristics, as well as the ancient merits and limitations. Speaking from the aspect of the subject, it depends on the object, is restricted by it, and is based upon it – and therefore cannot attain an independent development. Perception and reason present a

primitive balance and perfection in the subject, which is the reason why this kind of individual subject is often simplistic, and uncomplicated, abstract and not concrete, impoverished and superficial, and not rich or profound. It is characterised also by the lack of a subjective conscious awareness and the lack of an independent individual awareness. Viewed from the aspect of the object, in the eye of a primitive subject what is presented is not the purely essential truth of the objective world, but the typicality which not only lacks the concrete individual and perceptual characteristics, but is also deficient in its rationality and in complicated and rich connotations. In art and in the appreciation of the beautiful, it is often modelled and idealized, lacking contingency, individuality and ugliness. All these have not come into being until the emergence of modern society.

Modern beauty is exemplified by sublimity (beauty in a broad sense). Its contradictory nature and structural principle combine all the elements of beauty (and art) into a whole in an opposing, disorderly, turbulent and inharmonious way. The most fundamental distinction between modern sublimity and ancient harmony is that in the former the ancient harmonious circular motion of the latter was completely annihilated by the modern opposing principles. It is synchronous with the historical development in which capitalism replaced feudalism, metaphysics replaced plain and simple dialectics, and the modern people replaced the ancient people. The development of these contradictions has different stages, with modern beauty historically presenting the evolution from sublimity to absurdity via ugliness. The sublime, the ugly and the absurd are the three forms of the development of modern beauty (and art). Sublimity (in a narrow sense), realism and romanticism appear as the unfolding of the subject-object opposition on the subjective basis. In the sublime in its narrow sense imbalance is transformed into balance, opposite struggle into harmony, and constraint into freedom and liberation, which is why its opposition is of a limited nature. Ugliness (and modernist art) carry further the fission and the separation and push the limited opposition to the extreme form of mutual repellency. The extremity of opposition, the anti-harmony, becomes the fundamental characteristic of ugliness (and art). The absurd carries forth the extreme opposition of the ugly, and it places every factor and aspect of the opposition in a paradoxical position. In ugliness there is anti-harmony between two opposite sides, while in absurdity every aspect, each side and its elements themselves are further found in an anti-harmonious paradox. This is a kind of a more profound and more one-sided ugliness, thereby presenting absurdity and confusion, running counter to the normal, and deviating from logic.

Modern sublimity unfolds three concrete forms of the sublime, the ugly and the absurd. Here I should explain that the category of »sublimity« has two meanings: the first is the broad one, which contains three concrete forms, i.e. sublimity, ugliness and absurdity. The overall features of sublimity are the subject-object opposition which is unfolded on the basis of the subject. No matter what differences the sublime (in a narrow sense), the ugly and the absurd themselves have, all of them are in opposition on the basis of the relation between the subject and the object. But sublimity in the narrow sense differs from ugliness and absurdity, for its features are the combination of opposition and harmony, arriving at harmony from opposition, unlike the opposite extreme of ugliness and absurdity. Its correspondent forms are only romantic and realist art, not modernist or post-modern art. The evolution from sublimity to absurdity is suited to the flow of free industrial society, monopoly industrial society and post-industrial society, and suited to the gradual extreme opposition and mutual negation of the subject and the object, the rise of perceptual subject and the decline and fall of rational subject, and to the development of metaphysics, negative dialectics and paradoxical thinking.

Between the modern subject and object there is a deep opposition and pronounced and complicated relations of conflict unfold on the basis of the subject. The first is the rise of the subjective individual consciousness and of human liberation. Human beings as rational subjects confront the objective reality of feudal theology; this is the era of the emergence of sublimity and the successive replacement of romanticism with realism. The rational subject is transformed into a perceptual subject; the objective world is thoroughly negated, and the perceptual subject is broadened, for it attains the position of creating the world and dominating exclusively the earth beneath heaven. »God is dead«, »human beings still live« is that extreme opposition; the other is the opposition and change of symbolism and expressionism into naturalism. Once the perceptual subject parts from the object, or the individuality breaks away from society, its extreme expansion, at the same time, is diminishing too. The deep contradictory opposition and paradox presented in the subject itself and between the subject and the object changes into absurdity through the extreme fission of the ugly; in art the creation of the theatre of the absurd, black humour and the New Novel appear. Along with the continuous changes and development of the contradictory structures between the subject and the object in modern society, the subject and the object themselves reveal different characteristics. Viewed from the aspect of the subject, modern aesthetics and art have covered a road which began by extolling the rational subject, changed to eulogize perceptual sub-

ject and eventually led to the contradiction, paradox and the expiration of the perceptual subject itself. Compared with the ancient subject the rational subject of sublimity is complex and multi-faceted (polyhedral) and not simplistic; it is concrete, not abstract; it is abundant, not poor; especially, it is conscious, having a strong individual and independent consciousness, and does not attach itself to the object or the masses. But in the sensible subject of ugliness, human beings have changed into anti-rational beings and separated sensible life from reason; thinking and reason have changed into sensual desire; apparent consciousness and conscious awareness have turned into the subconscious, »sexual instinct« and »collective unconsciousness«. The subject of absurdity – what is left to a human being is only the »internality«, as Ihab Hassan (1925-) has said, from the masters of the world falling low to self-denying wandering ghosts; human beings wander about with no home to go to. Now not only »God is dead«, but also »human beings are also dead«.

Viewed from the position of the object, the object in sublimity, especially the object in realism is essential and inevitable, not experiential or typological; it is complicated, accidental, unique, and full of perceptual individual characteristics, not idealized or modelled. In the object of ugliness, particularly in naturalistic art, it develops mainly in the direction of the individual, the perceptual, the accidental, the detailed and the purely objective. To the object of absurdity, the unity and the essentiality of objective noumenon are completely negated; all has become centreless, depthless, essenceless or meaningless. The process went from contradiction and paradox to dispelling all oppositions and differences, among these also the hazy expectation of a new harmony and tranquility.

Contemporary dialectical harmonious beauty and art, are the newest stage of the development of human beauty and art; this concept thoroughly negates the absolute opposition of modern metaphysics and returns to the unity of ancient harmony.

In brief, ancient harmonious aesthetics is integrated with ancient simple and unadorned dialectical philosophy and modern sublime aesthetics is related to modern metaphysical philosophy. In it the development from sublimity via ugliness to absurdity is integrated with existential philosophy, negative dialectics and paradoxical thinking. In the future dialectical harmonious aesthetics will be integrated with conscious and scientific dialectical thinking. Scientific and dialectical thinking are the philosophical basis of the system of my harmonious aesthetics and the development of the harmonious aesthetics from the ancient and the modern to the present.

Albert van der Schoot
Rational Order in Tone Scales and Cone Scales

The belief that nature must be considered as a standard from which art can derive its guidelines (*natura artis magistra*) was firmly established during many centuries. Not so firm were the reasons *why* art should apprentice itself to nature. The eighteenth century saw the transition from a neoclassical conception of nature as being regularly ordered, and therefore an example to mankind (as in Pope's *Nature methodized*) to the Romantic idea of man being overwhelmed by nature (following Burke's *delightful sublimity*). By showing two controversies in very different fields I intend to show how, in a more subtle way, also in other periods the idea of an *intrinsically rational order in nature* comes into conflict with a more practical, empirical attitude.

In his *Istituzioni Armoniche* of 1558, Italian musical theorist Giuseppe Zarlino proposed to consider not only octave, fifth and fourth, but also third and sixth as consonant intervals. Historically speaking, this correction on Pythagorean thinking was long overdue. Thirds and sixths had gradually come to be accepted as harmonic shelters since the earliest forms of polyphony came into existence. But not before Zarlino did the major third acquire the prestigious position of being one of the cornerstones of the harmonic framework.

Zarlino's correction marks the end of the predominance of the Pythagorean *tetraktys* as a theoretical basis for harmony: the *tetraktys* allows only those intervals as consonant whose ratios can be expressed by the first four numbers.¹ Zarlino introduces a new concept in music theory: the *senario*, implying that *six* rather than *four* is the limit for the ratios that build up consonant intervals. Enter the major third (5 : 4), the minor third (6 : 5) and their counterparts, the minor sixth (8 : 5, where 8 is considered the twofold of 4) and the major sixth (5 : 3). The Venetian maestro believed that *just intonation* could be achieved by basing all intervals in a tone scale on the fifth and the major third. That leads to the only type of intonation which Zarlino is willing to consider as *natural*.² In other words: Zarlino did not so

¹ That is: the octave (2 : 1), the fifth (3 : 2) and the fourth (4 : 3) – and, trivially, the prime (1 : 1).

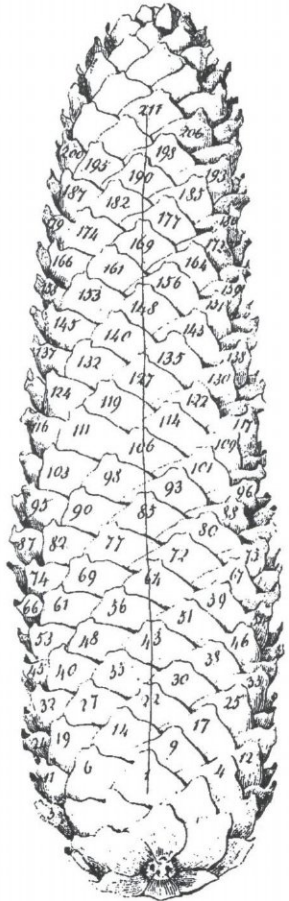
² *Just* and *natural* are still in use as synonyms for this particular intonation (in German: *reine* or *natürliche Stimmung*).

much *overthrow* the Pythagorean way of thinking in terms of rational order based on numerical ontology, but rather *saved* it by extending the range of fundamental numbers to six.

The attack on the ontological basis of this type of thinking was left to Vincenzo Galilei, father of the famous astronomer but also a pupil of Zarlinò's. Galilei does not accept his master's guideline of the *senario*. In particular, he attacks the status of fifth and third as »natural« intervals. *No such thing* – says Galilei: all intervals, all tone scales have come to be established by human convention. Exact rational proportions (in the mathematical sense of being expressible as a ratio of integers) have no special meaning here. There is no principal difference, in this respect, between the intervals of music and the words of a »natural« language.

Galilei's critical attitude towards his master's authority is fundamental. The idea that a consonant interval should be anything else but a rational number would have been considered absurd during the major part of European history. The foundation of that thought goes back at least as far as Plato's *Ti-maeus*, where the very ratios of the *tetraktys* are constitutive for the created order of the cosmos. Galilei's criticism clearly reflects more than just a musicological comment; it heralds the paradigm shift with which the name of his son will forever be linked. But before going deeper into the heated debate between master and pupil, we shall first take a look at a conflict in a completely different setting and time – not about a human product, but concerning the production of nature herself.

Towards the middle of the nineteenth century, a botanical debate flared up about the way in which nature accomodates certain primordia around a centre – like leaves around a stem, scales on a pine cone, sunflower seeds on a flower head, etc. Though we use to wonder about the amazing spiral structures which these plants show, we often do not realize that these spirals were not there in the first place. They come into existence step by step; in fact, the birth certificates of all the sunflower seeds are issued one by one, in a strict order that can even be traced subsequently. The spirals we see are no more than an epiphenomenon of a spiral we don't see, but which we can obtain by



connecting the scales in the order in which they popped up. We shall call this the *fundamental spiral* (in the picture: 1-2-3-4 etc.), whereas the contiguous parallels as they become visible are called *parastichies* (in the picture: 6-14-22-30, or 19-27-35-43 etc.).

By 1830, German botanist Alexander Braun had the brilliant idea to use the precise order of these scales for the classification of coniferous plants.³ Classification being a favourite pastime for botanists, the subtle differences between the implantation of the scales in the different species of coniferous plants seemed to offer an ideal handle to come to grips with the differences between them, and to label these differences. In order to work out these labels, Braun introduced the notion of *divergence* in botanical parlance. By notating such a divergence as, say, $8\frac{1}{2}21$ (as in the case of the pine cone on the picture), Braun meant that 21 scales were found when the fundamental spiral had rounded the cone exactly 8 times.⁴

The presupposition of this project is that the position of (in this case) the 22nd scale is exactly above the first. Braun's conception implies that, apart from the parastichies, each cone also shows parallel *orthostichies* (in the picture: 1-22-43-64, or 9-30-51-72 etc.). Braun does indeed believe that after a natural number of scales the fundamental spiral has come full circle, so that the ratio of the number of scales and the number of rotations can be expressed as an exact rational number.

No such thing – say two French scientists who started investigating coniferous plants around the same time as Braun did. Auguste and Louis Bravais observe the same cones as Braun, but see something entirely different. In particular, they do not see a series of distinctly different ratios in the divergences of the plants. Braun's differentiation is but an illusion, or so they claim. Nature has found the optimum angle for the implantation of every next seed or scale; that angle ensures that all the primordia have an optimum space to grow, and it remains the same at every turn: $137^{\circ} 30' 28''$.⁵ That amounts to a repeated division of the circle according to the golden section, which is an irrational measure and can, for that reason, never lead to the rational classification that Braun pursued. It is, however, a *constant* measure – the only one that grants equal rights to all primordia. The whole organ-

³ A. Braun, »Vergleichende Untersuchung über die Ordnung der Schuppen an den Tannenzapfen als Einleitung zur Untersuchung der Blattstellung überhaupt«, in *Nova Acta Academiae Caesareae Germanicae Leopoldinae*, Nr. 15, 1830, pp. 199-401; reprinted in book form in Bonn, 1831. Page numbers in this article refer to the book edition.

⁴ Numerator and denominator of the divergence will generally relate as the numbers $(n-1) : (n+1)$ from the Fibonacci series 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34

⁵ L. & A. Bravais, »Essai sur la disposition des feuilles curvisériées«, in *Annales des Sciences Naturelles*, Seconde Série, t. 8ème, 1837, pp. 70/1.

ism benefits from this equal division. Recent research⁶ has shown that this is, in fact, the way nature behaves; one does not need to involve genetical or teleological principles to find that the flower head of a sunflower is divided again and again, by each new primordium, according to the golden section.

Both controversies, the one in the Renaissance about the alleged rationality of tone scales and the one in the nineteenth century about the alleged rationality of cone scales, find their origin in opposing conceptions of the value of rational order in nature. Of course, both pairs of opponents have a lot in common, due to the preconceptions that even opponents would share in a certain age. Both Zarlino and Galilei frequently call on »the ancients« to substantiate their own point of view; both believe that the ancients had set an example, not so much by their high standard of cultural development, but by their being closer to *nature*, that is, by their better understanding of *natural order*.

Zarlino believes that Mother Nature restricts herself to a well-considered dose of perfection by differentiating between the individuals that belong to the same species rather than just cloning the ideal archetype again and again. He praises the ancients for transposing that principle to music, where repetition of identical consonant intervals is to be avoided:

»Thus they held it as true that whenever one had arrived at perfect consonance one had attained the end and the perfection toward which music tends, and in order not to give the ear too much of this perfection they did not wish it repeated over and over again.

The truth and excellence of this admirable and useful admonition are confirmed by the operations of Nature, for in bringing into being the individuals of each species she makes them similar to one another in general, yet different in some particular, a difference or variety affording much pleasure to our senses. This admirable order the composer ought to imitate, for the more his operations resemble those of our great mother, the more he will be esteemed. And to this course the numbers and proportions invite him, for in their natural order one will not find two similar proportions following one another immediately«⁷

Vincenzo Galilei is involved in a different battle. He is a member of the Florentine *Camerata*, the think-tank of humanist scholars and noblemen who paved the way for an entirely new form of art, a spectacle that would con-

⁶ S. Douady & Y. Couder, »Phyllotaxis as a Physical Self-Organized Growth Pattern«, in *Physical Review Letters*, Vol. 68, Nr. 13, 1992, pp. 2098-2101.

⁷ G. Zarlino, *Istituzioni Armoniche*, in O. Strunk (ed.), *Source readings in Music History*, Vol. II – *The Renaissance*, New York/London 1965, pp. 44/5.

quer European stages in the seventeenth century: opera. Opera is typically an art form that did not result directly from any development in musical practice, but was prepared on the drawing board. The main impulse came from the Florentine resistance against contemporary («modern») polyphony. Galilei's *Dialogo della musica antica e della moderna*⁸ is an ardent plea for a new type of music («postmodern», so to speak), that would do justice to the natural expression of human affections – a task which polyphonic music, with its intricate structure of simultaneous melodies giving voice to several texts at the same moment, could not possibly fulfil. The polyphonic music of Galilei's contemporaries is an insult to human nature (so he believes), and the music of antiquity is put forward in his writings as an inspiring guideline.

Intrinsically, differences of opinion between Zarlino and Galilei are not as great as their personal feud might suggest. Galilei would have no trouble with the quotation given above, regarding the desired variety in intervals, and Zarlino would wholeheartedly agree with the Camerata's preference for words above melody when putting text to music. Those were in fact the central issues of the time, and both authors were well aware of them. But unfortunately, both men were driven by ».... the desperate wish to contradict each other«.⁹ The advantage of this for later scholars is that their different attitudes towards the importance of rational order received much emphasis, and thus clearly expose the difference between Zarlino's neoplatonism and Galilei's more empirical approach.

Empirical research, as it became to be practised by the investigative Renaissance minds, did not automatically imply a repudiation of rational proportion. Galilei made a name for himself in the history of music theory by correcting what the Middle Ages had believed was an observation by Pythagoras himself: the discovery of the proportional relationships between the weight of the hammers used by the blacksmith, and the pitches of the sounds they produced. Every medieval music theorist knew that if a certain pitch was produced by tying a weight to a string, the octave of that pitch would be produced by tying the double weight to the same string, and a fifth with the help of a weight one and a half times the original, etc. In other words: these ratios were supposed to be the simple inversion of the (more easily measurable) ratios for string lengths producing the same intervals. Not so, says Galilei: to produce those intervals by tension, the weights would have to be in *squared* inverse proportion to the lengths of the strings. Their relationships to the perfect consonant intervals are still perfectly expressible as

⁸ Florence, 1581.

⁹ D.P. Walker, *Studies in Musical Science in the Late Renaissance*, Leiden 1978, p. 16.

ratios of whole numbers, but not anymore in the traditionally constitutive numbers of the Pythagorean *tetraktys*.

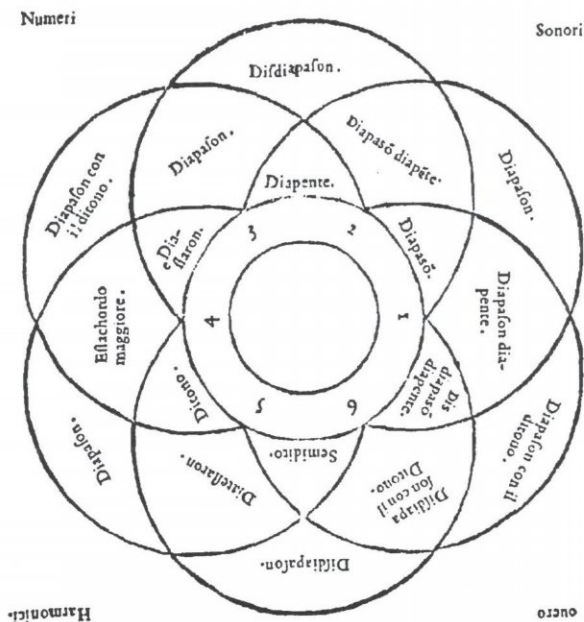
How did Galilei find this out? Going by his repeated reference to experimental method (*con il mezzo dell'«esperienza»*), we may safely assume: by trying out.

Zarlino, as we saw, did not stick either to the *tetraktys* to express the ratios of the imperfect consonances, but his argumentational back-up is of a totally different order. Why should the *senario* rather than the *tetraktys* be considered as the basis for our harmonic understanding? As if we could not have guessed:

- God created the world in six days
- six signs of the zodiac are always above the earth, the other six are invisible
- there are six »planets« (to Zarlino's knowledge: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, Mercury, and the moon)
- there are six directions (up, down, ahead, behind, left, and right; Zarlino calls on Plato to testify to this spatial insight)
- the number 6 is traditionally hailed as the first »perfect number«; that is, it equals the sum of its divisors 1, 2 and 3; moreover, it is their product

– in music, there are six »authentic« and six »plagal« modes.

Zarlino gives quite a few more reasons,¹⁰ but these six will suffice to show the gap that extends between the mental world of Zarlino and that of his pupil. Galilei, who was an early pioneer of *equal temperament*, did not feel anything was lost by giving up the perfectly rationally ordered intervals. Zarlino, on the other hand, could not imagine just intonation



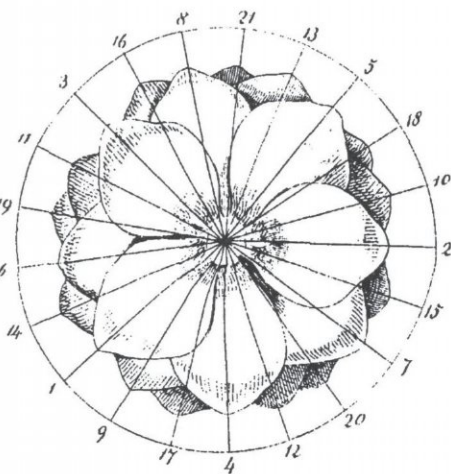
¹⁰ See C.V. Palisca, *Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought*, New Haven/London 1985, p. 248.

in any other way than by the *numeri sonori* of the *senario*, as this illustration from his book shows: a well-ordered world of musical intervals, with the *senario* in the centre.

The controversy between Alexander Braun and the Bravais brothers is situated in a different age, against the background of different scientific strategies. Experimental verification had become part and parcel of regular scientific behaviour by the time Braun developed his theory, and he himself was no exception: thousands of pine cones were collected by him and his colleague, Carl Schimper, and meticulously sorted out and classified. And yet, Braun is steered by another drive than collector's mania or labelling neurosis: he wants to unravel the hidden principle behind natural order as this becomes visible in the arrangement of leaves, seeds, petals and scales along a stem.

What Braun finds is fascinating, but much more fascinating is to know what he is looking for. Braun was, in his own words, chasing the »joyful presumption of a law founded deeply in the life of the plants« (*freudige Ahnung eines tief im Leben der Pflanze gegründeten Gesetzes*).¹¹ To this end, the exact description and classification of the outer appearance of the cones was not enough. In looking for his hidden law, Braun believed he was following nature herself. And when he found the constitutive spiral, the row that dictated the position of all the scales, he welcomed this »miraculous regularity of order« (*wunderbare Gesetzmässigkeit der Anordnung*) with an almost religious respect: »In this last, One Row, dawning upon our expectation, we behold the true goal of our hope, the One Ground of phyllotaxis, on which all multitude and variety of rows must rest.«¹²

Braun's drawing, within a circle, of a bottom view of the pine cone shows one layer of this rational order. It is almost reminiscent of the picture in Zarlino's book: a rounded way of thinking that always comes back to its point of departure.



¹¹ *Vergleichende Untersuchung*, p. 3.

¹² »In dieser uns in der Erwartung vorschwebenden letzten, Einen Reihe erblicken wir das wahre Ziel unserer Hoffnung, den Einen Grund der Blattstellung, auf dem alle Vielheit und Vielartigkeit der Reihen beruhen muss.« *Vergleichende Untersuchung*, p. 22.

There is an intriguing tension between unity and variety in Braun's conception of natural order, comparable to the way Zarlino deals with the perfection of consonants and their necessary differentiation in musical composition. The unity that is firmly established in the overall ruling of the fundamental spiral serves as a condition to bring out a multitude of differences – differences by which the several species of cones can be distinguished and labelled. Braun's aim is a classification in the line of Linnaeus, arrived at by means of empirical observation, but his regulative conception is that of an overall rational order. In other words: Braun treats divergences as if they were musical intervals according to a traditional system of temperament, and he does so on the basis of a deeply rooted inner conviction that this is how nature behaves. Braun's phyllotaxis reflects an order of *just intonation*.

It is to this preconception that the Bravais brothers oppose. There is no discrete classification of different divergences; when trying to attribute one of Braun's rational labels to a specific plant, the choice between, say, 8f21 or 13f34 often seems quite arbitrary. None of Braun's alleged observations is as precise as the exactitude of the rational measure suggests. The brothers carefully justify this statement with a number of illustrations. What they object to is in fact not so much the validity of Braun's equally careful observations, but the very status of the starting point which led these observations to result in the conclusions that Braun presented. That starting point is the concept of *orthostichy*, which, to continue the metaphor I have just introduced, in Braun's system of just botanical intonation fulfils the role of the *octave*, the point of reference for all the other intervals. The strong impact of Braun's conception becomes clear when we read that Carl Friedrich Naumann considered the *orthostichy* as »the real essence« (*das eigentliche Wesen*) and *parastichies* as »a mere phenomenon of phyllotaxis« (*ein blosses Phänomen der Blattstellung*).¹³ The alternative which the Bravais brothers present comes down to granting identical rights to primordia in the same way tones have identical rights in equal temperature – with the proviso that in the case of the plants, this equality is granted by nature.

Apart from carefully explaining their own theory, the Bravais brothers make a stand against Braun's position in a separate article.¹⁴ The tone of this article is (as opposed to Galilei's tone towards Zarlino) mild and respectful; Braun and Schimper are given ample credit for their research, and the opposition against the notion of *orthostichy* is very carefully presented. Braun

¹³ C.F. Naumann, *Über den Quincunx als Grundgesetz der Blattstellung vieler Pflanzen*, Dresden/Leipzig 1845, Vorwort.

¹⁴ Attached to the German translation of their work: L. & A. Bravais, *Über die geometrische Anordnung der Blätter und der Blütenstände*, Breslau 1839.

is less attentive in his reply to the brothers in a later book.¹⁵ In order to counterdict the French criticism, Braun tries to find a theoretical peg from an area where rational order had come to be understood and generally accepted: crystallography. As this happened to be Auguste Bravais's field of expertise, and as he had even been one of the pioneers in establishing which classes of crystals were morphologically possible, Braun seems to beat his opponent at his own game when he claims that wiping out the differences between the several rational divergences would amount to saying that all crystal forms are not really different because they all have the sphere as their limit.¹⁶

This argument sounds stronger than it is. Crystal forms are different for constructive reasons; as opposed to phyllotaxis, each specific form is the result of a different chemical build-up that is discretely established from the beginning. Whatever possibilities there are, the sphere is not among them. But it is an excellent illustration of Braun's way of thinking. He wants to see his covering law as a regulative principle, not as a generalisation of empirical data. Transcendent unity must appear to the senses as phenomenal variety. The realm of truth is not to be found in experience, but in the mind: »All truth is mental«, says Braun; »all facts become recognized truths only when we can mentally construct them«.¹⁷

It is almost touching to read how Nees von Esenbeck, the author of the introduction to the German translation of the Bravais writings, tries to unite the contribution of both parties in one encompassing reconciliation: having made clear that it was his compatriots Braun and Schimper who led the way and who took care of the essential discoveries, he compliments the Bravais brothers for their mathematical fine-tuning of the issue. The discovery of the »essentially irrational proportion« (*das wesentlich irrationale Verhältniss*) involved in the divergences, leads in his eye to the »ideal infinity of the fundamental spiral« (*die ideale Unendlichkeit der Grundwendel*). And he continues: »both these significant results are redeeming features not only for the metamorphosis of plants, but indeed for the philosophical contemplation of the organized world. It confirms the conviction that even the originally rational arrangements of leaves are subjected to the fundamental law of irrational [phyllotaxis], and are recognized as mere multiples of them«.¹⁸

¹⁵ A. Braun, *Betrachtungen über die Erscheinung der Verjüngung in der Natur*, Leipzig 1851.

¹⁶ *Betrachtungen*, p. 126.

¹⁷ A. Braun, »Dr. Carl Schimper's »Vorträge über die Möglichkeit eines wissenschaftlichen Verständnisses der Blattstellung«, in *Flora*, Jg. 18, I. Band, 1835, p. 146.

¹⁸ There seems to be a word lacking in the German text; maybe the dash after *irrationalen* in the manuscript was meant to repeat *Blattstellungen*: »diese beiden bedeutsamen Resultate sind Lichtpunkte nicht allein für die Pflanzenmetamorphose, sondern für die philosophische Betrachtung der organisirten Welt überhaupt. Man sieht mit

This is a surprising point of view. It combines the mathematical conclusion of the Bravais brothers concerning phyllotaxis with Braun's philosophical idealism concerning the fundamental order that prevails in nature – and yet manages to squeeze in the idea that these arrangements are »originally rational«.

It is not very difficult to round off empirical data concerning musical intervals or botanical primordia in such a way that the rationality hypothesis is confirmed. Both tone scales and cone scales come very close indeed. But this rationality comes about as a result of human evaluation. Whether, in the end, nature does or doesn't show rational order, depends – not on the nature of nature, but on the nature of our conception of natural order.

verstärkter Ueberzeugung, wie selbst die ursprünglich rationalen Blattstellungen der Pflanzen sich dem Grundgesetze der irrationalen – unterordnen, und als blosse Vielfache derselben erkannt werden (....).« L. & A. Bravais, *Über die geometrische Anordnung der Blätter und der Blütenstände*, Breslau 1839, pp. V/VI.

Christian G. Allesch
*Aesthetic Experience – a topic at the cross-roads
between philosophy and psychology*

To deal with the topic of aesthetic experience on a congress dedicated to »Aesthetics as Philosophy« provokes some critical remarks from a psychologist. I think that, due to the subjective nature of experience, it cannot be grasped adequately by a mere philosophical explanation. This is the reason why I want to contribute to this congress and in particular to the discussions of this section dealing with aesthetic experience some critical reflections on the role of philosophy and psychology in investigating aesthetic experience.

At this point I want to stress that this should not be understood as an attempt to renew the controversy dominating the aesthetic discussion at the beginning of our century, namely whether aesthetics should be grounded on a philosophy of values or on the base of empirical psychology and whether it should be regarded a philosophical or a psychological discipline (cf. Allesch 1987). Such »questiones iuris« usually remain unsolved, as Richard MUELLER -FREIENFELS stated already in 1925, however voluminous volumes might be published about them. It is not my intention to declare whether aesthetics should be part of philosophy *or* psychology, however, I want to stress some arguments why aesthetics should be conceived as an interdisciplinary project, and why I think that aesthetic experience is a distinctive topic to exemplify this suggestion.

Let me start with a question that has been a central topic of aesthetic discussion since aesthetics exists as a particular discipline, namely: What makes an experience an aesthetic experience? You know that there are two types of answers in the history of our discipline: The one, more objectivistic answer, points to the particular aesthetic nature of the aesthetic object. This means that the psychic or mental processes by which an aesthetic object is perceived do not essentially differ from other processes of perception. Thus, psychology that tries to explain the nature of these processes would not be able to contribute any substantial evidence about the aesthetic aspect of aesthetic experience.

The other, more subjectivistic answer, points to the fact that it depends on the intention of the beholder or listener whether a perceived object may be experienced as an aesthetic object. In this case, psychology has to be

regarded as a key discipline for the understanding and explanation of aesthetic experience since it actually refers to these subjective intentions and motivations which will enable or impede the realisation of an aesthetic experience.

This was the reason why Theodor LIPPS, one of the most engaged partisans of psychological aesthetics at the beginning of our century, claimed aesthetics to be a psychological discipline at all since, as he argued, its duty was to explain under which circumstances any object might be recognised as beautiful and this is actually what a psychological theory of experience was to achieve.

You know that this extreme argumentation in favour of a psychological conceptualisation of aesthetics is not held any more in recent theorising, not even in the contemporary psychology of art. On the one hand, also psychology of art accepted that there exists a certain kind of autonomy of aesthetic objects which cannot be explained by the particularities of subjective experiencing. On the other hand, it was in particular the contribution of phenomenological theories in aesthetics – I want to stress the work of Moritz GEIGER as a paradigm – which revealed the complex structure of aesthetic experience and convincingly suggested that what we call an aesthetic object is formed by the activity of a subject but constitutes a relation to a reality that itself constitutes the possibilities of the subject to face and to experience reality.

However, I think that it is not possible to outline a theory of aesthetic experience without regarding some fundamental evidence of psychology on the nature of human experience. I concede that it may depend on the kind of psychology which is taken into consideration whether this interdisciplinary approach will lead us to a satisfactory result. I think that some mistakes and resentments of aestheticians against a psychological interpretation of aesthetic phenomena does not result from an essential incompatibility of psychology and aesthetics but from the fact that they have dealt with a wrong or incompatible psychology.

Thus I concede that a psychological theory which is constructed in the classical behavioristic manner or in that more modern way of information processing theories will not be able to cover the particularities of aesthetic experience. But this is a type of psychology the capability of which to explain the nature of human experiencing should be questioned in general, that means not only with respect to aesthetic phenomena. I think that experience as performed by a human being living in a cultural context and conscious of its historic nature, that means being able or even forced to reflect on where it comes from and where it is to go, is totally different from the

kind of experience that can be modelled by those information processing activities as performed by a computer, however perfect and complicated it may be.

Modern psychology has become more and more aware of this fact during the last two decades but not all theoretical approaches have realised this development to the same amount. I want to outline now what kind of psychology would be necessary in order to cope with the particularities of aesthetic experience and in what manner a psychological theory of experience could be helpful for investigating this type of aesthetic problems.

Let me start with the argument that, if you consider aesthetics as the science of *aisth sis*, that means, of sensorial experience and not in the traditional sense as the science of art and beauty you inevitably will cross the borderline to the central domain of psychology. It points to the crucial ambiguity of the discipline denoted by the term »aesthetics« that, in order to emancipate from a theory of »experience in general« (as performed, for example, by KANT in his transcendental aesthetics as a part of his *Critique of Pure Reason*) it was to focus, in its historical shaping as a scientific discipline, its interest to a certain aspect or type of experience, namely what we refer to by the modern wording »aesthetic«.

I think that aesthetics has to find its proper position between two extremes: It can neither be conceived as a science of sensorial experience in general, nor should it stick to the traditional concepts of beauty and the arts as, for example, Wolfgang WELSCH convincingly argued in his plenary lecture on »Aesthetics beyond aesthetics« at our last congress in Lahti.

It is exactly this focusing on a certain 'aesthetic' type of experience that leads us back to our central question: what makes an aesthetic experience an aesthetic experience, or: how shall we pragmatically define the term 'aesthetic' in order to denote a type of experience which meets what we intend by the recent understanding of the realm of our discipline?

Now I would like to change my point of view again to that of a psychologist and ask for a useful psychological concept such as »experience«. The behaviorist doctrine which excluded all mental phenomena which cannot objectively be observed from the realm of science was not able to conceive and was not even interested in a concept like »experience«. Whatever experience might be and whatever might happen in our mind was reduced to the 'response' as the observable outcome of inner processes. The cognitive turn in psychology which started in the early fifties of our century, rejected the anti-mentalistic ban and made the mental processing which had been excluded by the behaviorists the central subject of psychology. However, until the seventies cognitive psychology understood perception as »information

processing«, i. e. in that mechanical sense in which information is processed by a technical system, since the booming information technology nurtured the expectation that mental processes could be modelled by the same kind of information processing which a computer performs.

It was a Gestalt psychologist who was also very engaged in aesthetic investigations, namely Rudolf ARNHEIM, who already in 1969, in his book *Visual Thinking*, stressed his conviction that human experience fundamentally differs from computerised data processing since it starts from the field of conscience, i. e. it proceeds from the whole to the parts and not from single data to a mechanically »computed« result. In the same way, but as early as 1935 another scholar of the Gestalt psychology school, namely the psychiatrist Erwin STRAUS in his important book *The sense of the senses* had suggested that »man thinks and not the brain«. It is exactly this question for »the sense of the senses« that leads psychology beyond the limits of a narrow-minded mentalism which would not be able to conceptualise »experience« in other than mechanistic terms.

In his famous outline of semiotics, *La struttura assente*, Umberto Eco distinguishes between »the world of signals« and »the world of sense«, where the world of signals is characterised by that type of information processing which can be carried out also by machines while the shift from the world of signals to the world of sense reflects the progression from the mechanical processing of a machine to the subjective world of a human being. This shift leads to another type of representation of the perceived outside world or even to another type of perception which is much closer to the meaning of the term »experience« than to a term such as »mental representation« as preferred by the cognitive psychology of the eighties.

Although we have to assume that what we phenomenologically denote with the term 'experience' is based on a certain physical representation as performed by biochemical processes in our brain, there is no evidence for the existence of phenomena comparable with human experience on the level of technical systems. And there are a lot of reasons to assume that this is not a problem of complexity but the result of a fundamental difference between biological systems created by evolutionary processes and technical systems designed by man.

You may realise the difference between technical signal-detection and human experience also by reflecting the meaning of aesthetic concepts like musicality. A sophisticated technical system like a high-tech tape recorder may achieve much more precise results in analysing frequencies than human beings but we would not assess this perfection as an outcome of its musicality. What we expect from a perfect tape recorder is not musicality

but high fidelity: it would, in fact, be an awful experience if a tape recorder did not represent the acoustical structure of music by a perfectly determined representation but, for example, amplify the volume of the cello part according to its immanent aesthetic interpretation.

This is the reason why psychological theorising on human perception during the last decades increasingly started to abandon the use of technical models of information processing for the explanation of the processes of human experience. The PDP-model of human perception (where 'PDP' stands for »parallel distributed processing«) as proposed by RUMELHART & MCCLELLAND in 1986, explicitly asked the question: »What makes people smarter than machines«, thus starting from the difference and not from the analogy between computer and human mind.

However, also these most recent branches of cognitive psychology cannot actually meet the particularity of aesthetic experience since they do not differentiate between perception as an objective function of the human mind and that subjective becoming aware of our personal existence in a meaningful world which may be better designated by the word »experience« than by the term »perception«. If we recur to this »humanistic« or »experiential« approach as GIFFORD called it in his outline of *Environmental Psychology* (1987) we have to realise that the cognitive approach widely ignored some essential aspects of human existence, namely the impact of emotions, the complexity of man-environment relations and man's involvement in culture.

It is, to my opinion, in particular the recent development of psychology of culture that offers a plausible solution for these deficiencies but, in addition to that, leads to a concept of human experience in cultural context that might be regarded as a useful psychological contribution to an interdisciplinary theory of aesthetic experience. I want to outline two examples in order to support this statement.

The first example is the symbolic action theory as developed by Ernst E. BOESCH, the nestor of German cultural psychology.

Already in 1980, in his book *Kultur und Handlung*, BOESCH coined the formula that culture is »the biotope of man«. In 1991, BOESCH reformulated his theoretical concept in an English reader entitled »Symbolic Action Theory and Cultural Psychology«. BOESCH conceives the cultural environment as a »limiting system« which, on the one hand, stimulates, and, on the other hand, impedes a certain type of action. This cultural significance of actions is, mainly, mediated by the symbolic meaning of the objects that form the action field of a concrete situation. Strictly speaking, BOESCH argues, we do not perceive objects as physical objects, but as options for real (BOESCH¹

says: *praxic*) or imagined acting, which may have objective purposes as well as subjective-functional meaning (for example the remembering of similar personal experiences). The objects of the human »field of action« are, »from a psychological point of view, not objects per se but representatives of systems and processes that go beyond the object itself«. What we perceive as the »form« of an object, is not just something »formal« like height, volume or texture but something that is »formed« by cultural traditions of perceiving as well as by subjective desires and potentialities of action. In this context, aesthetic objects play an exceptional role.

It was in a small essay, *Zwischen Angst und Triumph* (*Between anxiety and triumph*), published in 1975 that Ernst BOESCH for the first time explicitly tried to apply his symbolic action theory to the phenomenon of aesthetic experience. In this essay BOESCH argues that the aesthetic plays an important role in the process of the self which, in its lifelong attempt to cope with itself and the world, oscillates between encouragement and discouragement. Whatever makes the world more familiar to us is an encouraging experience. Aesthetic experience means, according to BOESCH, recognising our self within a world of symbolic forms which is »by no means to be limited to the work of art« but »may be stimulated by our fellow-beings, by nature, or even by an idea of particularly pregnant potency« (1975, p. 73).

In order to explain that, BOESCH sets up a rather risky but typical analogy between listening to music and skiing: Both activities have in common the pleasure of following an external structure by adequately reproducing and responding to the »figures« perceived. It is the stimulating experience to cope with reality, of being able to transform a formal idea into an adequate, harmonised movement of body and mind, that makes both activities in a comparable manner a possible subject of an aesthetic experience.

Another interesting suggestion was outlined by BOESCH in his book *The magic and the beautiful* in 1983, where he characterises the magic and the beautiful as contrasting cultural attitudes to face reality: While the magic attitude towards objects expresses a distancing function, the empathic disposition, which has a particular relation to the aesthetic, stresses being in harmony with the world. The aesthetic attitude thus tends »to expand the validity of the inner images« and »to transform counter-world into I-world«: The »beautiful object« perceived by the aesthetic empathy, as a »symbol of intended order« refers at the same time to the realisation of this order, functioning thus »as a corroboration of the self in much more pivotal and time-encompassing a sense than the merely momentary and concrete success of action« (1983, p. 316).

In *Symbolic Action Theory and Cultural Psychology*, BOESCH introduces the metaphor of »the trace« as a crucial concept in order to conceptualise the essence of aesthetic activity: »The trace extends the impact of *our* action into the external world, and ... it derives its attraction from this ... subjectivizing the external reality.« This means that the aesthetic object forms »a 'bridging object' in the sense of spanning the cleavage between person and matter, and between individual and group; it will, over time, even bridge the gap between present and past« (1991, p. 223).

I think that the metaphor »tracing reality« is a very good expression in order to illustrate how aesthetic experience is conceptualised by the Symbolic Action Theory of BOESCH (cf. Allesch 1993), since it connotes that this kind of experience – and even human experience in general – is more than just »facing reality« and much more than »information processing«.

If we interpret our capacity to trace the possible ways of changing, transforming and transfiguring reality as an essential prerequisite in order to cope with all the more or less important problems of our life, we will understand then why aesthetic experience is able to excite and to gratify by reinforcing our self and, furthermore, as BOESCH puts it, why men »put up with remarkable prices beauty fetches either by direct expenses or by time-consuming activities like ornamenting or dressing«.

I will not go into further details but I hope that you can agree with me that this concept offers very interesting topics for an interdisciplinary discussion on aesthetic experience.

Another interesting concept which I want to outline in a few words is the semiotic-ecological perspective as developed by Alfred LANG, a disciple of BOESCH who, until recently, held a chair for psychology at the University of Berne, Switzerland. LANG (1992) tries to overcome the traditional separation of the individual-related theorising of psychology and the object-related concepts of historical and cultural sciences. For him, culture is »external mind« in the same way as mind is an internal reflection of the cultural world outside. Therefore he tries to conceptualise a semiotic interpretation of the functional circle of the individual and the cultural environment. What happens outside the individual part of the world, namely the development of culture, may be interpreted as a semiotic process as well as what happens in the internal world of the individual, namely building up and restructuring of memory or shaping of habits and attitudes, and the processes of transfer between individual and culture, namely perception and acting. Thus, we may differentiate four aspects of sign formation which form the functional circle between individual and culture, namely

- IntrOsemiosis or perception which denotes a semiotic relation between cultural reality and its inner representation shaped by individual perception and cognition,

- IntrAsemiosis or internal mental organisation which restructures experience according to previous experiences and builds up the representation in memory. This may also be interpreted as a semiotic process;

- ExtrOsemiosis or »action«, which means external formation of structures by man influencing and forming his cultural environment. This type of sign generation also includes creative processes like creating a work of art or executing a scenic or musical performance;

- and finally ExtrAsemiosis which denotes the presence of created structures in and the permanent changing of the cultural environment which are not caused by direct influence of individuals. It is what LANG calls the »external soul«, the permanent traces of human activity and creativity in the cultural environment.

We may derive from this model that we will not have to face only what has its place in the external culture as a work of art or the beauty of a landscape but that we may deal with the aesthetic aspects of perception and of creative acting too and even, on part of the internal formation of structures, of fantasy *in terms of semiotic processes*. I think that this model is much closer to some theoretical developments within aesthetics than most former and traditional concepts of psychology.

You, as aestheticians, may be best suited to assess these theoretical ideas. I hope you will agree with me in the view that these are impressive examples in support of my theses that aesthetic experience forms a crucial topic at the cross-roads between aesthetics and psychology and that the investigation of aesthetic experience should be conceived as an interdisciplinary project. It was, also with respect to the limited time, not the aim of this paper to present an elaborated interdisciplinary theory of aesthetic experience, but I hope I was able to convince you that it is an interesting project to be developed in future co-operation.

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Vaidas Matonis
*Artistic Experience as a Construct of Multifaceted
Cognitive Sub-Systems*

Social instability and different systems of values entail deep spiritual anxiety which, in turn, influences everyday experiences, including artistic ones. Issues such as global terrorism and environmental degradation, economic recession and religious intolerance, psychological paralysis and chemical addiction which nowadays have reached epidemic proportions make it difficult for cultures to welcome emerging counterforces. As art is understood — by its content — as a kind of an imaginable being in life, it, consequently, seeks to find some dialogical contacts between contradictions of artistic manifestations. Artistic ideas as the artist conceives of them are just manifested by adequate artistic means and are expressed by some artistic form. The present article offers reflections on two aspects of multiart experience, namely on the problem of the main artistic domains and their formal relation to lifestyle elements or, using the phrase of the Renaissance thinker Nicholas of Cusa, »*Artis omnia formatis*« (the art forms everything), and the main characteristics of artistic manifestation, their interrelations and unity or, according to ancient Greek thinkers, »*Unitas in varietate*« (unity in the variety).

Artis omnia formatis

Recent theorists of multiartistic experience and policy makers in arts education have pointed out the necessity of a unified system of education based on aesthetic and humanistic foundations, one of which is a comprehensive approach to the teaching of the arts. In my opinion, the comprehensive arts program proposed by Bennett Reimer offers a sound basis for effective action. The general principle on which all aspects of his program are based is summarized in the following premise: »A successful approach to arts study must accomplish two essential tasks of cooperative endeavors — to preserve the integrity of each art while illustrating their nature as a family.«¹

¹ Bennett Reimer, *A Philosophy of Music Education*. Second Edition (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1989), p. 238.

We find that there are four basic artistic domains on the whole. They are: verbal, auditory, visual, and kinesthetic. These subdivisions are based on essential principles of space and time. In the first part of his *Critique of Pure Reason*, entitled »The Transcendental Aesthetic,« Immanuel Kant has persuaded Western Culture that »Time and space are (...) two sources of knowledge,« that »Time and space, taken together, are the pure forms of all sensible intuition,« and »Lastly transcendental aesthetic cannot contain more than these two elements, space and time.«² In our case auditory and verbal artistic domains are based on the substance of time, while visual arts are based on the substance of space, and kinesthetic arts are spatio-temporal. According to this classification, we have essential domains of artistic activity. The domains manifest themselves differently due to artistic views and according to instrumental purposes.

The main artistic domains (verbal, auditory, visual, and kinesthetic) as a foundation for multiarts experiences, in turn, are evidently closely connected with the main elements of lifestyle. In sociology, for example, lifestyle is understood as some common cultural form for different social groups. Hence youth culture is subdivided into four subcultures. They are: respectable youth, delinquent youth, cultural rebels (or bohemians), and politically militant youth (or radicals). All these subcultures have their specific symbolic use of a style which, according to professor of Carleton University Michael Brake, consists of three elements: »image« (appearance composed of costume and accessories such as hair-style, jewelry and artifacts), »demeanor« (made up of expression, gait and posture), and »argot« (a special vocabulary and how it is delivered).³

Singled out stylistic elements are based on firm philosophical and psychological principles. Thus, image and demeanor are the attributes of visibility and they have the same ontological axis of space, i.e. they are co-axial. The difference between them is found only in the area of mobility: spatial images are nearly static while demeanor is astatic. In contrast, the stylistic element of argot is based on an audible psychological ground and its ontological attribute is not space, but time. A special vocabulary such as argot, and even speech as a whole, is a very broad phenomenon of culture. Nevertheless, the linguistic area cannot completely express a way of life. In

² Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, transl. By Norman Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965), pp. 80 and 81-82. (Second Printing. Originally published in 1929.)

³ See: Michael Brake, *Comparative Youth Culture: The Sociology of Youth, Culture and Youth Subcultures in America, Britain and Canada* (London and New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987). Originally published in 1985.

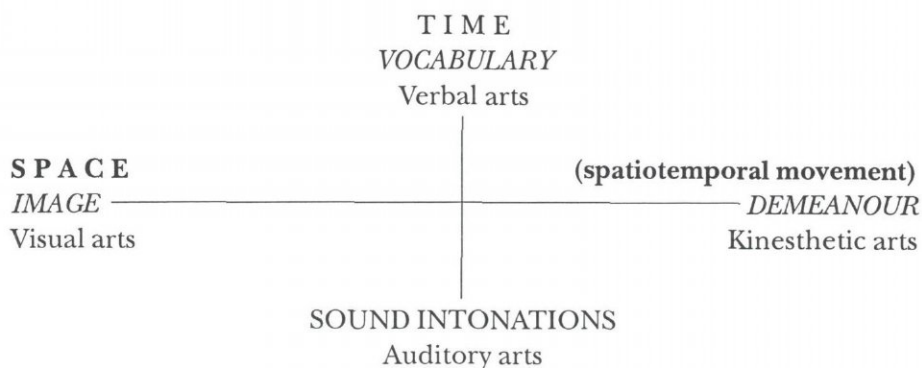


Fig. 1. Ontological attributes of lifestyle elements and basic artistic domains.

my opinion, it would be beneficial to add to the three mentioned elements a fourth one – the element of sound intonations. Now an axis of time would be coaxial, too, like an axis of space. It is clear that musical surroundings and vocal intonations represent an inner cultural world of the individual (and social group) along with hair-style, clothes, decorations, and other aspects of his or her appearance. In a few words, some kind of music fulfills the same symbolic function for distinct subcultures as does vocabulary, appearance or gait.

The most fascinating thing is that all four lifestyle elements (argot, image, demeanor, and sound intonations) are of the same nature and origin as the different kinds of artistic media (verbal, auditory, visual, and kinesthetic). They convincingly express the life attitudes of one or another (delinquents, bohemians, radicals, respectable youth) subcultural group or the individual. Visuality and audibility function as sign systems which obtain appropriate public forms. Consequently, according to the principle of continuum, the main forms of artistic manifestation find their direct connection with the most intimate forms of an individual's cultural expression.

It is these four elements of style that really help to know people (especially young people) better and to establish their relevant subcultural dependence. I noticed an excellent example of such insight in fiction when I was reading Chapter IV »A Queer Character« in Maine Reid's novel *The Land Pirates* to my younger son before his bedtime. This writer presented a marvelous fourfaceted description of the lifestyle case which fully conveyed a character of the horseman met on the road:

There was something in the style of the man we met – both in his *speech* and *demeanor* – that provoked a feeling of indignation (...) I could see

that he was what, in the Southern States, is called a »bully.« Its broad arrow was upon him – unmistakably impressed on his *countenance*, as well as in the way in which he carried himself. There was a swagger that seemed intended to conceal the coward (...)

It was the sight of these ugly *insignia*, carried so ostentatiously, that had produced my first feeling of aversion – soon strengthened, however, by the bantering *tone* in which he talked to my young companion (...) ⁴

It is striking that the expression of the face (»countenance«) is mentioned in this discourse along with all four elements of the lifestyle.

The whole pedagogical enterprise considered from the perspective of the existing social order is charged to keep in touch with young people, especially with young people at risk, in order to maintain both their visibility and audibility related to the dominant normative system. Democracy as a condition for developing human beings to be free and capable of creativity, of course, should become stronger and stronger. One of the most important assumptions of this condition is to increase the civic activity of the young generation. A highly influential way of doing this is participation in students' everyday life. On the other hand, young people in a democratic society are more or less free to express their inner world by those external means which they like or pretend to like. Thus, their lifestyle can inform us to some extent of their identification with different cultural youth groups. Such information could be used for taxonomic aid (for example, pointing to the set of cultural values which could indicate dependency on one or another subcultural group), as well as for observation of subcultural tendencies of the young generation. Arts education, especially one which is based on the comprehensive multiarts approach, could in turn influence both the elements of lifestyle and the cultural life of subcultural groups.

Unitas in varietate

Similarly, the present artistic culture entails the urgent problem of *extending* a sphere of artistic being according to the possibilities of aesthetic perception and artworks interpretation. It means that attention of investigators should relevantly be focused, along with traditional art, both on practically oriented and postmodern artworks (artifactual art, conceptual art and the like). Contemporary philosophy of art is already in the process of fulfilling this task. As was suggested by Arthur Danto, »a philosophy of art must

⁴ Mayne Reid, *The Land Pirates: or, The League of Devil's Island* (New York: Beadle & Adams, 1886), p. 5. All italics added, except »*insignia*.«

be consistent with all the art there is and ever has been» and further added that »an adequate philosophy of art straightaway entails pluralism, for it would be wholly adventitious that there should be only one kind of art.«⁵ It seems to me that a philosophy of arts education is preferable if it is consistent with all the arts, too, including »transitional« spheres of artistic activity, which manifests itself between the artworld and material and ideal worlds.

Though history observes constant changes in the forms of artistic manifestation and their varying degrees of importance, time reveals that some characteristics of that manifestation have common traits in every art domain. The characteristics about the way an individual experiences the aesthetic/artistic world might be classified into three relative sub-systems (groups). The *first* sub-system contains pure artistic characteristics which show various facets of artistic manifestation (form, representation, expression). They are highly discussed in a contemporary philosophy of art as well as philosophy of arts education.

The representative and expressive characteristics of artistic manifestation are closely connected with the characteristic of *formal* artistic manifestation. It is characterized by prevalence of the total contextual arrangement of elements of some stuff in order to achieve a certain result. Sometimes form is considered as such type of property on which most other aesthetic properties depend. Priority of form is characteristic of abstract fine arts, pure dance, experimental drama or movies, absolute music.

The artistic *representation* is characterized as mimetic, imitative, naturalistic, programmatic, referential, realistic, hyper-realistic and so forth. This facet has been observed in the evolution of art, revived each time in a new shape. With the decline of precision in depicting the world, each artist interpreting the object in a different manner, artistic representation should eternally remain as a certain evidence of the aesthetic relation between the subject and the surrounding world. Different kinds of art in the representational characteristic are known in the history of the arts as imitative visual arts, realistic literature, drama and cinema, thematic dance, and programmatic music.

Lastly, the characteristic of artistic *expression* is presented in literature in a rather different way. In some theoretical trends it is considered to be the expression of the creator's emotions; in others, mainly the result of the creation process; in still others, the art's power to evoke emotional responses of the recipient or to be a basis for interpersonal communication. The expression characteristic consists of various kinds of the arts which have rel-

⁵ Arthur C. Danto »Art after the End of Art,« in *Artforum International* (April 1993), p. 67.

evant names, such as highly expressive works of drama, dance or music, literature or visual arts. The distinction between representation, expression and form in arts calls for different distribution of the perceiver's attention and determines a variety of artistic experience.

Gene H. Blocker successfully divided all three artistic characteristics as oppositions of heteronomy and autonomy. So the idea of abstract form is opposed to the organic sense of formal composition; the imitation theory is criticized in favor of artistic representation; to the interpretation of artistic expression as the venting of human emotion, he preferred a view of expression as embodied emotion.⁶ In this paper I prefer the concept of expressiveness which was recently elaborated in aesthetic theory. I am going to use it as a contrast to the concept of expression.

The *second* sub-system contains applied artistic characteristics (utilitarian and pragmatic criteria). Bifunctional (aesthetic and useful) nature of these characteristics determines their relevant place in the arts system and artistic experience. Thus, oratorical art (some artistically created and occasionally performed under various circumstances, such as congratulations, funeral speeches, sermons, anecdotes and so forth) and artistic expository writing are closely related to pure verbal arts; commercial visual arts, connected with consuming culture (pragmatism), and applied visual arts (utilitarianism) are related to pure visual arts; artistic sports are related to pure dance. Even music is commonly exploited for its concomitant (perceived in passing) role. As shown by investigations, nontraditional music instruction coupled with background music gives, for the most part, negligible results and cannot be a substitute of any kind for formalized music instruction.⁷ Nevertheless, background music is effective in a variety of settings for an array of uses.

The purpose of artistic surroundings is mainly the emotional unity of people in various life situations. This refers to both commercial art (pragmatism) and traditional applied art (utilitarianism). The artistic pragmatism has appeared in recent historical period as a result of development of consumer culture. Advertising art and relevant verbal texts, commercial music and dance, drama or sports shows, advertising theatrical series on TV and the like represent this characteristic of artistic manifestation. If the main function of the applied arts, along with the aesthetic one, is utilitarian (i.e. to use applied arts or ritual actions practically), the main function of artis-

⁶ See H. Gene Blocker, *Philosophy of Art* (New York: Charles Scribners, 1979).

⁷ Deborah A. Sheldon, »Between Classes: The Effects of Non-Traditional Instruction and Background Music on Music Learning and Preference,« in *Contributions to Music Education* 22 (Ohio Music Education Association, 1995), pp. 24-39.

tic pragmatism, along with the aesthetic one, is to make commercial profit from various artifacts or entertainments.

Thus, two different and to some extent opposite areas of the respondent's relation to arts have been observed. In modern literature the way of perceiving artworks intentionally, mainly concentrating on them, is called percipience. Artworks, however, can also be perceived concomitantly, that is perceived in passing, while the observer is participating in some other activity. This includes musical background and ritual music, accidentally seen works of art and architecture, theatrical performances in everyday or religious rites or on military and festive occasions. Both these areas of art perception are relatively autonomous, whilst their limits are sometimes exceeded.

Lastly, the *third* sub-system contains art-like artistic characteristics (aesthetically intentional human activity). It contains aesthetic characteristics of the surrounding reality (naturalism), on the one hand, and hermeneutic manifestation of arts, on the other.

Some examples of artistic naturalism are expressively used natural sounds and words of natural (sometimes also artificial) speech, natural things, phenomena and movements. When they are regarded for their aesthetic meaning they may serve as examples of artistic naturalism. Hermeneutic characteristic (interpretation) is one of the newest tendencies in the development of the artistic mind, which is essentially connected with post-modernism. The crucial feature of this characteristic is an emphasis on subjective associations and cultural context in contrast to high modernism which emphasizes artistic form and artistic autonomy.⁸

The last dozen years have, in effect, raised, in addition to applied forms of art, such forms of artistic activity as found art, conceptual art, performance art or electronic art which extended the boundaries of the artistic field. Incidentally, such a limiting edge has been achieved even during my introductory discussions with students—future teachers of Lithuanian. One of the answers to the question »When is art?« was rhetorically reformulated in the form of a question: »Well, but how to ascertain when life is already a life and when it is not a life? The same pertains to art.«

Using the method of deconstructive activity it is possible to show key artistic characteristics (concepts) of every sub-system in their interrelationship. So the privileged artistic characteristics at a certain stage of their historical development make either some suppress the opposite ones or the privilege is

⁸ More detailed description of these characteristics in terms of visual art education can be found in Dalia Siaulytė, Vaidas Matonis »Toward a Relationship between National Homogeneity and Multiculturalism in Visual Arts« in *Canadian Review of Art Education: Research and issues*, forthcoming.

replaced by equality or, lastly, primacy is assigned to the formerly suppressed characteristics. Similar interrelations (vertically or diagonally) seemingly might be noticed among all above mentioned characteristics as well.

Characteristics of artistic manifestation

Pure artistic characteristics

Abstract formalism – Organic formalism

Representation – Imitation

Expressiveness – Expression

Applied artistic characteristics

Pragmatism – Utilitarianism

Art-like artistic characteristics

Interpretation – Naturalism

Distinguishing and cultivating the above-mentioned artistic characteristics in training practice is important because they consistently fill the medium between objects and/or phenomena and ideas and thus partly solve the problem of dualism of material and ideal. The fact that along with the pure arts the most popular ones are mixed domains of aesthetic and artistic activity (such as artistic gymnastics and figure skating, applied arts and design, oratorical skills and artistic expository writing, background and ritual music, highly theatricalized forms of cultural life and the like) and that they are included in artistic training, testifies to the consistent filling of the vacuum between the ideal and the material. Nevertheless, in every respect the mature artistic manifestation sphere (pure art) should have the greatest masters' works as the main object of artistic cognition.

As the outcome of the action of different sub-systems, the articulation of the artistic experience can promote understanding of the continuum of the artistic field and can further development of the arts curriculum. The multifaceted approach to the arts experience presented in this paper is especially beneficial for *extensional comprehensive arts education* the main focus of which is concentrated on prospects of an extended arts education curriculum. The general idea is based on the principle of continuum and reveals the possibilities of unifying all characteristics of the arts and of the aesthetic manifestation. The main emphasis is put on the rejoining of aesthetic, applied, interpretative, and natural properties of artistic/aesthetic activity which were fatally disconnected for a long time within the eighteenth-century philosophical thought. However, the aesthetically intentional human activity and achievements of the institutional theory of art, as well as post-

institutional conceptions, were not overlooked. Applied and intentional aspects of different arts domains (verbal, auditory, visual, and kinesthetic) are in close interaction with the experience of major characteristics of the pure artistic characteristics, including the neighboring aesthetic characteristics in the unified field of arts education. This extends significantly the possibility for a more reliable, comprehensive arts curriculum strategy. At the same time, arts education comes into proximity of everyday life practices in various meaningful realms of culture. Simple participation in everyday cultural phenomena could induce the process of education (including arts education) to achieve its goal and help implement the ultimate purpose of a curriculum which is to enhance individual understanding and develop personal identity.

Raffaele Milani
The Aesthetic Exploitation of Landscape

The aesthetic discovery of landscape in Europe is fairly recent and dates back to the 18th century when the threat of industrialisation became visible and tangible. To put it succinctly, landscape is the overall view an observer (immobile or in motion) has of his surroundings from a given angle. However the focus on the landscape in its varied forms, like the pleasure one derives from observing it, delineates a complex shift in sensibility and thinking from a historical and cultural viewpoint open to profound and metaphorical meanings bound up with being. The landscape thus can be seen as a concept concerning numerous disciplines. If we restrict our analysis to the area of aesthetics, to the taste for nature which developed during the Age of Reason, the scene which immediately unfolds before us presents the picturesque as a vision of nature.

Historically the concept of the picturesque has been interpreted as the reappraisal and view of nature from the point of view of an aesthetic reflection on beauty. Signs of this research on landscape and the environment can be traced even prior to its theorization in Great Britain at the end of the 18th century to Vasari when this term was used merely to indicate a technique in painting »alla pittoresca«. Even then these signs were highly particular ways of depicting life and objects in relation to the perceptual and psychological activity of the subject. During the 17th century and above all during the 18th century the picturesque progressively developed into a taste through a pressing visual strategy by virtue of what was »proper to painting and painters«. Thus in the complex transition from the classical to the romantic, we witness the aesthetic discovery of landscape parallel to the positive discovery of the natural sciences. Moreover, because of the reasons mentioned above, a fertile exchange between the eye which observes and contemplates (the natural eye) and the selective eye of painting (the pictorial eye) can be discerned in these pathways. This exchange is also extended to the relation between creation and utilization, between painter and observer. Since psychological processes are linked to the evolution of taste, seeing (I am referring to the historico-perceptual strategies of the picturesque) implies a view; whereas contemplating and representing are seen as

promoting a poetic broadening of perception, giving rise to an aesthetic emotion and an authentic vision.

In its search for effect and its taste for ruins the picturesque marks the passage from the baroque to romanticism as it distances itself from reason and from the rules of classicism relying on freedom of invention. It does not convey a profound authentic feeling, but a suggestive staging of curiosities and impressions from which unusual and powerful images of wild and spontaneous nature arise. During the 18th century in Great Britain the picturesque mingled with the sublime theorized by Burke, with the gothic and with the pastoral tradition of literature. It is a plural concept in which *beauty in painting* merges with *beauty in nature*. This can be seen in the visual arts, architecture, gardening, literature (visual descriptivism) and the taste for travel and faraway places.

In this investigation the picturesque is probably also the first important theory concerning the landscape. Outside Europe, in China for example, the aesthetic interest in the landscape flourished much earlier – about a millenium earlier – and led to the view of man and nature conjoined within a cosmic, spiritual design. Behind its evolution and its visual discovery seen as a framework of observation, composition and points of view (lights, panoramas, scenes) a description unfolds which in time selects, improves, orders, establishes criteria, sets up comparisons, and elaborates ideas. From the feeling of wonder experienced by John Dennis (1693), John Addison (1705), Anthony Shaftesbury (1709) and George Berkeley at the sight of overhanging rocks, roaring torrents, rugged cliffs and waterfalls, and shadowy forests to the research conducted by William Gilpin, Uvedale Price and Richard Payne Knight anticipating romantic, frenzy, an aesthetic theory emerges, halfway between our imagination and the pleasure of sight and of the senses. It is a reasoned sensibility founded on the value attributed to the irregularity, variety, intricacy and roughness of a wild and disorderly nature, an aesthetic pleasure which relies on spontaneity and caprice. Nature is a spectacle, a theater of the unusual, the stage of our imaginings, a point of departure and of return. The astonishment expressed by Goethe (1779) and Hegel (1795) before the view of the Bernese Alps can easily be read as a romantic passion emerging from a pleasure typical of picturesque taste. The traveller of the picturesque was guided towards solitary and uncommon landscapes, architectural ruins and tangled vegetation. The description of landscapes becomes a composition of selected images, a classification of events and impressions, conjoined judgments made explicit, an elaboration of general concepts and of practical interventions, a path of analogies and memories, a project of variable patterns, a focus on particular knowledge to attain a heightened sensibility. In the writ-

ings on the picturesque at the end of the 18th century and at the beginning of the 19th century a broad and systematic interpretation of the world around us and of vegetable, animal and human life began to take shape. What we find interesting today, despite the differences between the various authors and their cultural and temporal backgrounds, is the strategy adopted in the observation of nature, the measures to improve its arrangement and the pleasures that this arouses also in relation to spectacular outcomes, effect and feeling. It is a reordering that follows the laws of nature and the work of man, an illusion worth returning to in order to reformulate our attitudes. This illusion was to appear again in the observations of Schinkel and Constable and later expanded in a project for a new sensibility in philosophy.

Many things have changed since the end of the 18th century, but this profound feeling for nature has not died out, for we still seek an intimate contact with the landscape, seen and experienced as a whole by our minds and bodies. Between the world of nature and the world of art which reflects it, beauty, grace, the sublime, the picturesque and other aesthetic ideas continue to spread their seeds and suggest infinite forms to the imagination. To perceive the landscape undoubtedly brings into play an aesthetic act which forms our culture and history in general. In this connection the teachings of Rosario Assunto in Italy were decisive in pointing out how the landscape and its interpretation promote a high degree of civilization in the evolution of taste.

He reminded us that the landscape contains the traces of the identity of nature and of the spirit in proposing sensibilities illuminated in turn by various aesthetic categories. Contemplation, he asserted, is not pure fantasy, but an exercise in feeling. Certain morphologies of landscape can become traces of poetics, or ideal indications. Beneath these analyses and the sentiment of nature lies a criticism whereby material being is the result of a working process equal to aesthetic being. Landscape is an aesthetic institution by virtue of itself, of literary and travel testimonies, of visual arts and of the subject's imagination. This takes us back to the relation between nature and culture within which the ecological comparison falls. In Assunto's thought landscape is the form of culture and history, the form in which culture and history have been absorbed. As for the problem regarding the value of natural beauty, he opposes the views expressed by Croce (*Aesthetica in nuce*) who reiterated the traditional separation between natural and artistic beauty. Assunto (*Introduzione alla critica del paesaggio*, 1963) also proposes to establish whether it is possible to elaborate a »landscape criticism« comparable to art criticism. This would give rise to a landscape criticism centering on the feeling of nature involving philosophical reality, culture, and the vision of the world in a connection supported by the aesthetic ideal. This ideal

underlies the discovery of nature and transforms man into an artist. As the mediator between nature and history, man today must flee from the city of Prometheus founded on economism, technical rationalism and scientism and seek shelter in the city of Anfione who softened the rationality of building with music and song.

In recent years the attention has been focused not so much on the comparison between aesthetic sensibility and artistic production, on the aims of philosophy and the »objectivity« of natural beauty as on the fact that nature itself may be perceived as a work of art. As a result one needs to go beyond the perspective of a study of landscape in art, as Kenneth Clark did, or conversely, of art in landscape, as the theoreticians of the picturesque at the end of the 18th century proposed. Moreover, even the difference between gardens and the natural and cultural landscape, the latter being the result of the work of man who molded it, is for the most part interpreted today as an art of nature capable of encompassing garden and landscape. The landscape (natural or rural) of the entire world could be viewed as a garden, and all the gardens of the world, even the smallest ones, could be considered landscapes in relation to the world in its totality.

An aesthetics of landscape is thus delineated which, beyond the debate on the system of the arts, appears to be far removed from the principle of »aimless finalism«, of the »disinterested pleasure« of art elaborated by Kant. The broadened notion which is presented allows one to consider both theoretical and practical aspects ranging from the fields of philosophy to art, from psychology to anthropology, from agriculture and geography to biology and ecology: in short, aesthetic utopia becomes also an ethical project.

The aesthetics of landscape is based on the fact that we are the ones who have created the image of what surrounds us, both on the plane of feeling and of the representation of things, in history and through history. The very myth of the wilderness, fueled by the fathers of modern environmentalism, should be reconsidered in the light of our vision of nature, even the wildest landscape very often bears the signs of man and, in any case, the wilderness once again expresses the search of the imagination, the will of creative insight to discover the intimate genius of the world around us. Nature and human perception (undoubtedly oriented and heightened perception), like the relationship between object and subject, are not two distinct kingdoms and cannot be separated. A panorama is formed by the varieties of the given materials of which it is composed, but also by the memories which have built up and overlapped over the centuries in a process contemporaneous to writing. As Simon Shama asserts, it is our perception that creates the difference between raw material and landscape.

The landscape therefore is a product of man's work and mind. It is in this way that we may comprehend how the sight of nature arouses the imagination. The imagination, as we know, is strictly linked to perception in contemplating the landscape. The genius of a single artist is replaced by the genius of the earth and of our meeting with nature when, voluntarily or involuntarily, we are prompted to assign the value of art to it, bearing in mind that history and memory must never be seen as distinct from man's living experience. As Maurice Merleau-Ponty aptly put it, the landscape is situated between the gaze cast by the observer and the flesh of the world. It is the result of a synaesthetic act and is at one with us.

Psychological time, connected to the fruition of what surrounds us, expanding and suddenly contracting, is no doubt important from the viewpoint of aesthetic reception and artistic creation, but movement is also central because of the variation of the points of view it produces. With respect to the aesthetic perception of landscape, movement automatically involves other senses: besides sight, a fixed gaze and its particular vertigo of feeling, hearing, smell and taste as well.

Movement exerts an all-embracing grip on the world and involves the whole body. At a more careful examination what emerges is a continual interplay of viewpoints in time and space according to different speeds and means. Walking, dancing, swimming, riding, cycling, travelling by motorcycle, car, train or plane are, in our case, ways of experiencing the landscape aesthetically. As described by literature, painting and other arts and as we can directly experience ourselves, the landscape changes its appearance. We live in the wonder of feeling, ranging from a solitary stroll, reminiscent of Rousseau, to a journey by plane. The landscape alters its appearance thanks to our movements, but also thanks to other factors – atmospheric, climatic and seasonal variations of light, color, wind and temperature – to variations caused by natural phenomena (vulcanic eruptions, earthquakes and so on) or to contact with different materials such as sand, earth, water, grass, marble, etc.

The perception of movement, time and space is conditioned by the changing landscape. In this connection it must be pointed out that today man's interventions are not restricted to cultivated land and woodlands, but also comprise those of contemporary art such as land art, earth art, environmental art and ecological art. These events are the concern of environmental aesthetics which, on the one hand, observes and theorizes artistic processes linked to the environment, and, on the other, launches the idea of safeguarding nature in the same way as one does works of art. At any rate, environmental aesthetics and the aesthetics of landscape may be usefully integrated.

The evolution of taste for an aesthetic categorization of our surroundings in a perception of both distance and closeness must not be seen as focusing exclusively on the past or on purposes of conservation and restoration, but also on the future. Among the landscapes that this aesthetics comprises (natural, cultural, urban), those provided by space exploration must also be included. Within a few years human beings will colonize various points of our solar system, and it will no longer be a question of observing privileged landscapes; we will have the thrill of a new Grand Tour. How then will sensibility respond amid virtual reality, new media and adventures outside our planet? We will soon find out by undergoing rapid cultural changes. However we must take note of the fact that our sensibility expands between the universe of communication and space exploration as homogenization advances (the number of species is diminishing as well as the number of languages and cultural habits). The appraisal of nature can reach and is already reaching borders undreamed of even a few years ago.

The aesthetics of landscape is an organic rethinking of the sentiment of nature, a product of the outcomes of civilization and art. It is at the same time history, criticism, culture, conservation, education and work; it transforms man, capable of seeing, contemplating, respecting and promoting, so that he may be conducted from a plane of mere reception to one of active, profound participation, beyond the consumption of green space, beyond a logic linked to the use of leisure time, beyond simplistic solutions of environmental impact along a path originating in ancient Greece and leading to the present. Along this path we are invited to consider certain morphologies of landscape as traces of a poetics, as ideal suggestions, and to detach ourselves from a ravaged space-environment in order to relaunch an aesthetic and ecological project on a vast scale. Because a place is not only a set of physical and geographical features, but an irrepressible, symbolic, unconscious, individual and collective memory.

Besides the authors and ideas usually associated with the aesthetics of landscape, two further considerations must be added. The first one concerns the cathartic effect of a »beautiful view« in Arthur Schopenhauer, the second is the motif of illusion in Jurgis Baltrusaitis.

In Book III of the *Supplements* (1844) [*Ergänzungen: Vereinzelte Bemerkungen über Naturschönheit*] to *The World as Will and Idea*, Schopenhauer dwells on the observations regarding the beauty of nature and states that every modification, even the slightest, which an object undergoes due to its position, shortening, distance, illumination or linear and aerial perspective is infallibly given by its effect on the eye and taken into exact account; the Indian proverb »every grain of rice casts a shadow« is thus validated. In this

chapter the assertion »how aesthetic nature is« refers to the variety and spontaneity of nature and praises its wildness. However, what strikes one most about these pages is the consideration that thought pursues the method of nature after receiving its first impulse. He explicitly declares: »A beautiful view is therefore a cathartic of the mind, just as music according to Aristotle is of the feeling, and in its presence one will think most correctly« [*Eine schöne Aussicht ist daher ein Kathartikon des Geistes, wie die Musik, nach Aristoteles des Gemütes, und in ihrer Gegenwart wird man am richtigsten denken*]. These reflections are influenced by several passages in paragraph 39 of *The World as Will and Idea* where the sentiment of the sublime and of the variety of nature in the representation of our mind is discussed. Despite the difference between the motifs, the beautiful view as a 'cathartic of the mind' (*Supplements*) echoes a passage in *The World as Will and Idea* where consciousness is described as dissolving into nothingness, like a drop of water in an ocean: we are one with the world. Schopenhauer observes that many objects of our intuition arouse the sentiment of the sublime in us because, by virtue of their great extension and antiquity, in other words, of their duration, we feel reduced to nothingness in their presence, yet we are inebriated by the joy of contemplating them; high mountains, the Pyramids and the colossal ruins of ancient times belong to this category. It is in this sense that nature is the aesthetic manifesting itself as art. The cathartic effect and the principle of annulment are valuable in aiding our understanding of the very quality of feeling and contemplating.

Equally valuable in Baltrušaitis' view according to which the garden is a place of illusion (a term already employed together with reinvention), not only in the sense of a fantastic microcosm, but also as the sum of the most diverse forms of experience and knowledge, from plants to animals, from water to minerals, in an infinite broadening of horizons. Natural history, archeology, the history of civilizations and technologies take part in this evolution of the garden in the perspective of a new encyclopedia. As an image of the world, the landscape, like the garden is revealed to be a terrain of illusion, totality, eternity and beauty in a surge of nostalgia and melancholy. The landscape is a completed vision, endlessly entwined and fluctuating in the depths of spirituality and pervaded by the inexpressible: it is an internal vision which corresponds to an external vision in a mutual disappearance of nature and man. This vision can be understood as spiritual form and work of art (in a process) of styles capable of dissolving into an original, essential, oneiric nothingness. Baltrušaitis develops his theory of illusion through affective elements in a becoming of recognition of object and subject. Illusion is the basis of a philosophy of the earth, of thought regarding

our affective origin in nature in the light of hope and trust in the salvation of humanity. Let us instill the vision of an earth renewed, an eden regained, a dream about to be fulfilled. As illusion is not alien to our imagination, it is not, nor should it be alien to our doing.

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Joosik Min
Fengliu, the Aesthetic Way of Life in East Asian Culture

I. Fengliu as a Basic Concept of East Asian Aesthetics

Generally the name of aesthetics is given to a branch of philosophy which has been shaped and developed in European countries, and its main subjects have been beauty, fine arts and sensual cognition. However, there is no guarantee that the concepts of beauty and fine arts for Western people is necessarily in accord with those for Eastern people. Moreover the concepts of beauty and fine arts in the West were not fixed, and have been changing continuously in history.

Therefore when we East Asian people study our own traditional aesthetics today, it is more fruitful not so much to pay attention to the translated words of beauty or fine arts used in the Western language as to find out our own concepts equivalent to the Western concepts in the role. We cannot assert that the words such as beauty and fine arts are the main concepts in East Asian aesthetics. At least in Korean traditional thought the values and phenomena of beauty and fine arts were not dealt with separately, but treated and regarded as relating strongly to other values and phenomena. They were especially linked to morals or ethics, and, furthermore, sometimes subordinated to them according to circumstances.

In this paper I would like to discuss *fengliu* as a methodological concept of East Asian aesthetics which comprises three main aspects of aesthetic studies such as beauty, fine arts and sensual cognition. In Eastern thought the concept of *fengliu* is able to integrate various aspects of aesthetic issues. It has had an important and continuous role in the historical development in East Asian classical aesthetics. For this reason *fengliu* could also be called the basic founding concept of East Asian aesthetics.

Fengliu (or *poongryu* in Korean and *furyu* in Japanese) means »the stream of wind« in the literal sense of the word. It implies giving full play to one's free-spirited and extravagant mind. Once, when Confucius asked his pupils about their hopes for the future, the pupil Zi-lu replied that he hoped to rescue the country from danger as a politician, Ran You hoped to raise the wealth of the people as a person working in the area of economy, and Gong-Xi Hua replied that his hope was to become a government official.

Only Zeng Xi didn't reply, so the Master asked him again. Zeng Xi said that at the end of spring, when the making of the Spring Clothes had been completed, he wished to go with five or six newly-capped youths and six or seven uncapped boys, to perform the lustration in the river I, take the air at the Rain Dance altars, and then go home singing. The Master heaved a deep sigh and said, I am with Zeng Xi.¹ The case of *fengliu* in Zeng Xi meant breaking off relations with the trivialities of ordinary life.

This free and extravagant spirit can be displayed not only in the attitudes on politics and society, but also in the realm of literature and taste. Furthermore, it can be displayed in relation with the opposite sex and in the way of life. In short, the life of a free man, sharing the benefits of an unrestraining attitude towards the environment and a personal loftiness is to be called *fengliu*. To enjoy a hermit's life and to be excellent in »*quintan*« or the clean discourse are good examples of *fengliu*. The disposition of the clean discourse became »*xuanxue*«, or the profound philosophy, as combined with the tradition of Buddhism; later the profound philosophy developed as Zen-Buddhist philosophy so that it placed the tradition of *fengliu* on the side of the mind. *Fengliu* has a tendency to raise the ordinary life to the aesthetic state or the world of art. Therefore the full content of *fengliu* is nothing but the aesthetic way of life.

II. The Origin and Transition of Fengliu

The implications of *fengliu* have been interpreted differently with the change of times. The original meaning in China implied simply a custom handed down from the preceding king. In the Han period (206 BC – 220 AD) the meaning was changed to become a laudable and beautiful custom in politics and education. Later on it has been used to judge the merit of a person, to qualify the attitude of life and to designate the doctrine of artistic beauty. Still later it implied, on the one hand, the beauty of natural scenery or a person's appearance and, on the other hand, aesthetic life in relation to taste or amorous life.

The concept of *fengliu* as an expression of aesthetic consciousness was widespread in the period of Wei Jin (3rd century – 4th century). According to Yuan Hong's book *Description on Post-Han Dynasty*, the word »*feng*« means moral influence which spreads outside, and »*liu*« means fidelity which inclines toward the inside. Similarly, the concept of *fengliu*, comprising a moral

¹ *The Analects of Confucius*, translated and annotated by Arthur Waley, Vintage Books, New York, 1938, pp. 154-160.

meaning, such as personality and fidelity, was advanced in the Jin period. It was moreover mentioned just after the description of an event that was attributed to an upright group of university students who struggled against the arbitrariness of eunuchs. The apostle of *fengliu* according to Yuan Hong was none other than this upright group. This kind of *fengliu* was called »*fengliu* of a celebrity« in the book *Shishuo*. In the Jin period the *fengliu* of a celebrity took on the »*fengliu* of a hermit«. Furthermore, *fengliu* implied the character and the tune of poetry. In the usage »*fengliu* of poetry«, »*feng*« signified the elegance of poetry and »*liu*« its uniqueness. Hence *fengliu* in the Jin period which was grounded on fidelity, began to signify both the spirit of Taoist sequestered life of standing aloof of politics and business, and the artistic spirit tintured with the taste of the nobility. It is natural that *fengliu* should be influenced by Taoism, which was very influential in that period. Many Taoists have elucidated the aesthetic way of life. An example can be found in the famous chapter »Let Fancy Roam« by Chuang Tzu. *Fengliu* came close to the aesthetic idea of an artistic and tasteful life, which was supported, formed and developed by the luxurious life of the clan. In this way in the Jin period the concept of *fengliu* acquired the meaning of an aesthetic idea.

The meaning of *fengliu* became almost the same as that of the word »*ya*« or elegance which is opposite to »*su*« or vulgarism. In the sixth century the meaning of *fengliu* changed again to designate voluptuous beauty. We can find many examples in the poems entitled *Yu Tai Xin Yong Ji* which was one of the best anthologies compiled in those days. In the fifth century there emerged a new meaning, for they would call *fengliu* a man who was untidy and slovenly. From the usage »dissipated *fengliu*« at that time, we presume that the concept *fengliu* and dissoluteness were difficult to separate. As King Jianwendi of the Yang dynasty in the sixth century said, »if the writing is dissolute, it is better,« the excessive movement of feeling was considered to be valuable. The implication of voluptuousness soon began to imply a lewd man as is known from the usage of »*fengliu* talent« which appeared in the Tang poems. In the end, the word *fengliu* was used to designate a voluptuous beauty and suggested especially thoughts of a sexual nature.

As we can see, the meaning of the word *fengliu* has changed many times. Nonetheless, in composition sentences it always accompanied the feeling of yearning and recollection, this being true from the Tang period to the modern ages. This was so because it is derived from the meaning of hereditary customs and character. The Chinese dictionary *Pei Wen Yun Fu* lists most of the usages of *fengliu* that appeared in Chinese classical writings. The usages are rearranged into seven groups in the modern dictionary

Ci Yuan. They are as follows: (1) the remnants of a beautiful custom; (2) the physical appearance and attitude of a man; (3) grace or dignity; (4) the brilliance of beautiful scenery; (5) to go against etiquette, to make one's own style and to express something different from ordinary people; (6) unusual spiritual ability; and (7) to call at prostitutes' quarters.

If we reexamine the above contents, we find that the first usage denotes the flowing of beautiful customs made by the preceding king. It means the tradition of morals and customs which aim at the realization of a moral and political culture based on »the Way of a King«. In short we interpret it as good customs among the people or as beautiful customs of the world. The second and third usages signify the individually preeminent character or dignity, and, further, the visible appearance in which the character and the dignity were manifested externally. Consequently it denotes the attitude of life which shows human merits in a broad sense. In some cases we can regard it as the grace of work of art in general because it designates the style or norm of music. The fourth usage denotes the existence of the aesthetic qualities which can be discovered in the attributes of natural things. For example, the aesthetic quality of elegance in the long drooping branches of a willow tree is such a case. The fifth and the sixth usage refer to the spiritual state which is extraordinary, lofty and graceful. It is the aspect of cultured elegance free from the trammels of ordinary life. It signifies the greatness of not only a moral mentality but also artistic and literary cultivation. In short, it is a refined and graceful literati taste. The seventh is a transferred meaning in particular which implies amorous feelings.

The general usages of *fengliu* are the ones mentioned above. The basic meaning supporting those usages, in brief, signifies the existence of a spiritual value. The content was mainly political and educational at first, then it gradually spread into the sphere of moral and aesthetic value, and eventually to that of customs, individuals, natural things and works of art all over the world.

III. The Contents of Fengliu

1. Fengliu and Individuality

In Wei Jin and the Nan Bei Chao period (4th century – 5th century) the pressure of traditional conventions was diminished, and instead a new tendency toward individualism appeared, which was linked to *fengliu*. There was a kind of romanticism which emphasized the importance to be conscious of one's own nature and of emancipating one's own individuality. It was

entirely different from the rigorous courtesy or decorum of the previous period which emphasized formality. There had been a period like this giving priority to fidelity. To attach great importance to fidelity and honour in this new moral etiquette had a strong connection with an emphasis on the individual or the self. The discovery of beauty in the individual was one of the peculiar characteristics of the thoughts of *fengliu* in the Jin period.

2. Fengliu and Nature

The Taoist philosophy of *Lao Tzu* and *Chuang Tzu*, which is the basis of Chinese thought, gave reliable ground to the people who lived in the midst of great political and social upheavals. The art of living for Taoists meant to »return to nature.« The representative poets in this period *Dao Wenming* and *Shi Lingwin* tried to return to pastoral nature in order to achieve the emancipation of one's own nature. Many people sought truth and beauty in nature. The people who escaped from corrupt society were able to achieve goodness in nature. For them nature was the only environment in which they were able to emancipate their individuality freely and to regain their original goodness. They looked for Arcadia in nature in which they could forget real society. The idea of the return to nature and to emancipate the individuality was gradually colonizing the notion of the hermit's *fengliu*. In this way the idea of *fengliu*, which had regard for the impressive beauty of individuality, came to imply the beauty of nature.

3. Fengliu and the Fine Arts

Both music and dance have their own structures and offer unique impressions. They have peculiar characters and norms, respectively. This also holds true in the case of poetry. The idea of *fengliu* is similar to that of fine arts, for it enables us to discover the uniqueness of and recognize the individuality in various kinds and types. We can find the expression »one personality has one school« which used the word *fengliu* in the chapter of *Biography of Shi Lingwin* by *Wen Shen*. This usage informs us that *fengliu* has the attribute of individual items. The beauty of individuality in music and literature has two sides. One is the individuality of the author or the performer, while the other is the individuality of the work of art. According to *Gu Kaizhi*, the most important thing in figure painting is to animate the individuality of a person by tracing the divine energy. He also maintains that the expression of the divine principle is vital in landscape painting. *Fengliu* is a synonym of the word such as divine energy or spiritual brilliance, which is the expression of the divine principle.

4. Fengliu and the Playing Man

Chinese culture had flourished in the period of Wei Jin, especially in the period of Dongjin. The persons leading the prosperous culture were the

hermit and the nobility of that period which were generally called the »sons of noble birth«. Many *fengliu* men from Shi Shuo Xin Yu were the youth born in purple, i.e. nobility. The power of the nobility was great and their sons had the opportunity to take an active part in the life of the time. Under such social circumstances *fengliu* developed rapidly among the sons of noble birth, and consequently the aesthetic way of life formed a specific feature of the intellectual class. At such a time the character of *fengliu* shifted from the sequestered life to the fashionable taste of the aristocratic youth living in flourishing towns. The moral *fengliu* such as fidelity became the aesthetic *fengliu* of aristocratic youth in the Jin period.

IV. The Korean Thoughts of Fengliu

The first Korean usage of the word *fengliu* or »*poongryu*« (in Korean) is in *A Foreword to the Monument of Aengrang* written by Choi Chiwon in the late ninth century in the Shilla period. According to the record, »the way of *poongryu*« was the main practical idea of education. Its contents include the thoughts of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism. It originally came from the Korean ancient traditional thought and was afterwards combined with those three foreign traditions. Some scholars called the ancient traditional thought »*barg* or brightness thought«, others called it »*buru* (archaic word for *poongryu*) thought«.

In Korea the idea of *poongryu* had been established in conjunction with the »*hwarang*« corps which was an educational and military organization meant to train and cultivate the youth. Perhaps it was called »the Way« of *poongryu* in the sense that it was the educational idea of *hwarang* to bring up an aesthetic man. Its main contents are as follows: firstly, to learn morals and beautiful customs; secondly, to enjoy fine arts in daily living; and thirdly, to appreciate beautiful nature. The first one came from the original meaning of *fengliu*, signifying that we could contribute to the realization of moral and political culture by continuously observing the traditional beautiful customs of the preceding king. The second one implies that Shilla people, especially the *hwarang*, enjoyed poetry, music and dance, aiming at a sublimation of the human mind into unworldliness and harmony. The youth *hwarang* purified their hearts by artistic life, obtained inner harmony of mind, and experienced the infinite freedom of spirit. The third designates the method of cultivation which trains the mind and body by wandering over hills and waters. The *hwarang* foster faith and reverence to majestic nature through visiting mountains and rivers and enjoying beautiful scenery. They

contemplated the beauty and sublime of nature and prayed to nature. They breathed the ether of nature and indulged in it. At last they constructed the unworldly and lofty spirit world within themselves. The way of *poongryu* was a principal idea in Shilla culture, especially as an educational idea for *hwarang*, and it contributed largely to national prosperity.

The thought of *poongryu* established in the Shilla period has played an important role in forming the tradition of Korean aesthetics. For Koreans the *poongryu* helps seek the refined and harmonious sublimation of the human mind. It has been always supported by moral consciousness. In some cases it was supported by the magnanimous spirit of reconciliation, in others by the spirit of fidelity or constancy, and in some cases by the spirit of transience.

There is an image of »a stream of wind« that comes about under the influence of the consciousness of *fengliu* as we know it in its literal meaning. While a stream of water is controlled by the configuration of the ground, a stream of wind experiences no restraints. At the bottom of *fengliu* there is a vigorous spirit which stands aloof of the trivialities of life and wanders around the empty sky. This stream of wind is differentiated by strong and weak currents, and fast and slow ones, depending on the time and place. There is a soft breeze in spring, on the one hand, and a refreshing breeze in autumn, on the other. A rough typhoon accompanies a storm, while a blizzard accompanies a snowstorm. If we look in retrospect at the history of Korean aesthetics from the viewpoint of *fengliu*, it appears sometimes as a stream of wind raised high and sometimes raised low. Just like the wind becomes warm or cold, according to seasons and topological circumstances, *fengliu* became mild (or »*fengya*«, a kind of elegance) or severe (»*fengci*«, a kind of satire). In other words, there exists a positive and an affirmative *fengliu*, on the one hand, and a negative and rebellious *fengliu*, on the other.

When Koreans discuss the characteristics of their own culture and art they frequently use the word »*meot*«. *Meot* is one of the representative words conveying the Korean aesthetic consciousness, and cannot be written in Chinese characters. Although it is used in some cases to indicate the beauty of nature and work of art, it mainly implies the beauty expressed in human personality, attitude, behaviour and way of life. In this sense it possesses a peculiarity in contrast to other aesthetic categories. It is not only one of the norms of aesthetic judgment but also an idea of human cultivation. *Meot* has developed as a norm of life to Koreans more than as an artistic implication. It denotes nothing more than spiritual freedom and a mode of life unrestrained by practical life. In this sense *meot* is inseparably related to *poongryu*. In other words *meot* is another name for *poongryu* in modern times. It is a

kind of *meot* to live freely in the rural environment, leaving behind fame and wealth and distancing oneself from the numerous everyday events in the current time of confusion. But *meot* is different from the life of a recluse, for it is connected with optimism.

We don't know exactly when the word *meot* was used for the first time. We presume that it indicates the *poongryu* which permeates the life of common people, while the word *poongryu* signifies the aesthetic consciousness or way of life of the nobility or the educated literati. We may say that *meot* is a new Korean version of *fengliu*. It is notable that *meot* is one of the main aesthetic categories in Korean culture. At the same time it is the educational idea to foster »*seonbi*« or literati who have both learning and morality, as well as sympathy and generosity. Just as the idea of human cultivation of *hwarang* in the ancient Shilla period was *poongryu*, the idea of human cultivation of *seonbi* or literati in the modern Choseon period was *meot*. Both *meot* and *poongryu* share the »*hung*« or attractiveness and the »*shinbaram*« of exulted spirits. Both share the optimistic playfulness, on the one hand, and mettle, fidelity, vigorousness, and broad-mindedness, on the other. For Koreans »to live with *meot*« or »to know *poongryu*« is the highest praise. *Meot* and *poongryu* are concepts of the aesthetic way of life.

It should be noted that recently the word *poongryu* or *meot* has become less used than in the past. In modern society it seems to be gradually withering away, for everything is becoming »average«. In this period of internationalization of culture its meaning and thoughts are being lost little by little. Indeed, nowadays it is more significant to inquire into the aesthetics of *fengliu*. We have defined the *fengliu* concept as follows: it means to give full play to one's free and extravagant spirit which stands aloof of the trivialities of life, in spite of having connection with reality. In such a case the nature offers an open place in which the free spirit is not restricted in its movement. Poetry, music and liquor are the intermediate items in order to give full play to the free spirit effectively. *Fengliu* is a way of behaviour or life which has aesthetic and moral character.

V. Conclusion

Recently a Japanese writer Fujiwara Shigekazu wrote a book on *fengliu*.² He tried to suggest *fengliu* as a model of environmental life while inquiring into the structure of *fengliu*. According to him, the factors supporting

² Fujiwara Shigekazu, *The Thoughts of Fengliu (Furyu no Shiso)*, Hosokan, Kyoto, 1994, pp. 263-266.

the structure of *fengliu* are as follows: an unrestrained posture, play, surplus, an open mind and body, and detachment. At the bottom of these factors nature is permeated deeply. Consequently *fengliu* signifies a come-and-go approach to boundaries and one's pleasure unrestrained by both the subject and the object. It is a borderless reconciliation that is not involved in the distinction between the subject and the object. It is a correspondence with all things in nature through a sense of playfulness. It is a way of living, i.e. a free detachment which is always employed to establish contact with things and leave its direction to wind, opening the mind and body to all things. It is just the time that we have to make a new life model or life manners grounded on the ethics covering the whole ecosystem which consists of all living creatures. At this time I hope that the manners of *fengliu*, which can be called the poetics of correspondence with all the things within an ecosystem, will be resuscitated. I think that in the present time the environmental implication of *fengliu* is very important. I expect that the idea of *fengliu* will play an important role as a model of environmental life and still more as a model of the way of life which is able to cultivate our personality grounded on the true subjectivity of human existence.

Christiane Page
*Une expérience esthétique:
Le travail du grotesque dans la formation de l'acteur*

Parodier, briser les apparences, provoquer, remettre en cause les contraintes et la force de l'ordre, démasquer la vérité, exagérer, telle est la fonction du grotesque au théâtre, et le spectateur assis dans son fauteuil et témoin du »scandale esthétique¹ « est violemment provoqué.

Au contraire, dans le cadre de la formation du comédien, le grotesque devient une expérience d'une qualité différente, puisque vécue sur un mode d'être actif par la personne dans sa globalité : À partir d'une recherche physique passant par la déformation de certaines parties du corps, il s'agit de construire un corps différent, d'en chercher la puissance dramatique et d'en percevoir la force parodique en prenant appui sur l'approche du grotesque tel qu'il apparaît dans le domaine de la peinture et de la littérature. Ce travail provoque chez l'acteur une façon de sentir son corps, de le vivre et de l'utiliser pour mieux parodier, mieux jouer, mieux signifier dans un contexte culturel où le rapport au corps est codifié de manière rigide. Il permet d'explorer des voies, de découvrir des pistes et de travailler sur les limites pour développer l'être.

Si dans la création artistique le but est l'oeuvre, le but de l'atelier de formation est le processus de développement de la personne du comédien. Le travail sur le grotesque s'inscrit dans cette logique, comme composante essentielle du parcours de formation. Meyerhold affirmait:

« Tout théâtre authentique ne peut pas ne pas être grotesque, qu'il soit un drame, une comédie, une tragédie, un vaudeville, une farce. »²

Tous les grands hommes de théâtre se sont penchés sur le grotesque, mais, actuellement, peu d'écoles y consacrent un temps de recherche important (en France, l'école de Jacques Lecoq fait exception, tout en restant extérieure à l'esprit du grotesque tel que je l'envisage ici).

¹ Pour M. RIBON, le monstrueux dans l'art est un scandale esthétique, car l'accueil que nous lui faisons est mêlé « d'attrait et de répulsion » : « Le monstre a le pouvoir d'installer notre jouissance au coeur de notre répulsion. » *L'archipel de la laideur, Essai sur l'art et la laideur*, Paris, éd. Kimé, 1995, p. 132.

² PICON-VALLIN (B), V. Meyerhold, *Le grotesque au théâtre, 1905-1926*, Paris III, 1987, p. 596.

Élaboration du corps grotesque

En préalable au travail proprement dit sur le grotesque, il s'agit de mettre en place les conditions de la jouissance de l'exagération et de son incarnation à partir d'une expérience conduisant les comédiens à s'engager totalement. En effet, si au Moyen Âge le grotesque, assumé par la collectivité était intégré à la vie dont il exprimait et révélait des aspects vitaux, sa conception en est de nos jours essentiellement satirique et dégradante, donnant une représentation caricaturale des aspects refoulés de la vie, sans les prendre en charge, dans un «spectacle grimacier», un «faire semblant» dont la caractéristique principale est le désengagement par rapport à l'acte représenté³. Comme le souligne Bakhtine, (auquel je me réfère, plutôt qu'à Kayser, car son approche positive est un des points d'appui qui permet aux élèves comédiens de faire corps avec la démesure), si l'auteur satirique se situe à l'extérieur de l'objet de sa raillerie, il s'oppose à celui-ci et son discours devient moralisant. Cette évolution, selon lui est à mettre en relation avec l'avènement d'un corps idéalisé, fermé :

«un corps parfaitement prêt, achevé, rigoureusement délimité, fermé, montré de l'extérieur, non mêlé, individuel et expressif.»⁴

Pour incarner le grotesque, retrouver un corps ouvert en relation avec le monde, le comédien doit se préparer à chercher et à assumer dans son corps et avec son corps, une idéologie différente.

«Le corps grotesque est un corps en mouvement. Il n'est jamais prêt ni achevé : il est toujours en état de construction, de création et lui-même construit un autre corps; de plus ce corps absorbe le monde et est absorbé par ce dernier.»⁵

La première étape du travail consiste donc en une exploration corporelle de la déformation pendant laquelle l'élève essaye différentes possibilités en garnissant de mousse⁶ l'espace entre son corps et son vêtement de manière à modifier la forme de son corps. Seules les mains et le visage sont nus, les cheveux recouverts d'un chapeau ou d'un bonnet.

À ce stade, l'élève se sent corporellement protégé par la mousse (comme par des coussins) dans son contact avec le milieu (sol, murs) et avec

³ PAGE (C), *Du jeu spontané au jeu dramatique*, in *Pratiques corporelles* n° 116, sept 97, 18000, Bourges, France.

⁴ BAKHTINE (M) *L'œuvre de François Rabelais et la culture populaire au Moyen âge et à la Renaissance*, Paris NRF, Gallimard, 1978, p. 318.

⁵ BAKHTINE (M), *opus cité*, p. 315.

⁶ Je ne m'attarde pas, ici, à développer l'aspect technique de construction du corps du personnage grotesque, ni les exercices.

le regard des autres (élèves) qui ne le voient pas lui, mais seulement cette forme à l'intérieur de laquelle il se trouve et se cache. Les bosses le protègent sur ses arrières et ceci est d'autant plus important que le dos est la partie de soi qu'on ne peut voir, dont on a difficilement une représentation et qui par là est vulnérable. Les bosses ventrales protègent la partie centrale de son corps fortement investie : Le ventre, siège de la maternité en est aussi le symbole; centre des plaisirs de toutes natures -amour, bonne chère- il est le symbole de la prospérité, de la plénitude; à l'opposé, symbole de la misère, de la maladie, du manque il est aussi le carrefour des angoisses.

L'élève construit l'équivalent d'une enveloppe maternante au sein de laquelle il se sent en sécurité. Les premiers corps des personnages ainsi ébauchés oscillent souvent entre l'informe et le difforme, ce qui est à la fois la preuve des résistances au déverrouillage des frontières et la conséquence de la peur du regard de l'autre, car l'élève travaille ici sans miroir, à déformer son corps dont la perception est livrée aux autres élèves de l'atelier, qui contribuent à le construire. À ce stade, en laissant de côté tout jugement qui pourrait menacer la suite du travail, on permet la découverte d'un corps dont les frontières ne constituent pas un donné définitif, mais sont au contraire le point de départ de l'acte créateur.

Car, si à la beauté on attribue des valeurs positives, la laideur physique provoque la répulsion, est assimilée à une laideur morale et ses manifestations sont fantasmatiquement assimilées à toute cette part de nocturne de nous-mêmes, proches des contes fantastiques et de nos zones d'ombres explorées par la psychanalyse.

«Nous sentons confusément que la menace qu'elle (la laideur) fait peser sur le confort de notre identité se fait soudain intérieure, comme si le spectacle qu'elle nous imposait risquait, pour peu que nous accordions quelque durée à la perception que nous en avons, de réveiller en nous la part maudite ou la part de détresse de ce que nous sommes intimentement : cette part de monstrueuse altérité que nous nous refusons d'abord à voir ou qui, dans un premier temps de notre être, est l'objet de notre dénégaration.» ⁷

C'est pourquoi dans l'atelier la forme est d'abord prise dans une fonction de protection. Chaque élève a investi physiquement, psychologiquement et affectivement le corps transformé. La laideur et la monstruosité qui en résultent, en sus des résultats recherchés, représentent un aspect secondaire qui est perçu, accepté mais sur lequel on ne s'attarde pas puisque l'essentiel, le sentiment d'être en développement et en conquête de soi-même est vécue positivement :

⁷ RIBON (M), *opus cité*, p. 99.

«Je me sens si bien avec mes bosses, mais c'est tellement contraire à tous nos critères de beauté...si j'étais vraiment comme ça, personne ne voudrait de moi, et ils auraient tort, car là je suis ce que je suis réellement.» (une étudiante de l'Institut d'études théâtrales)

Ici, la conquête du monstrueux est joyeuse et retrouve ses liens manifestes avec l'esprit de renouveau du carnaval du Moyen-Âge.

«Le carnaval c'est avant tout l'avènement d'un temps joyeux, qui interdit à l'ancien de se perpétuer et ne cesse d'engendrer le nouveau et le jeune.»⁸

La difformité devient la marque d'une renaissance possible ainsi que d'une liberté et d'une jouissance à être que le (la) comédien (enne) gagne. »L'homme masqué du carnaval c'est l'homme social démasqué«⁹ en même temps, le masque est un écran le dissimulant au regard des autres. Cette double fonction du masque permet aux personnes de s'exposer en toute sécurité. De même, dans ce travail de recherche autour du corps grotesque, l'élève découvre le masque corporel; il va d'abord l'essayer, puis s'en servir à l'insu croit-il des autres (mais souvent, aussi de lui-même). Petit à petit, par la construction, puis par la mise en action de cette nouvelle enveloppe corporelle, il va jouer à faire comme s'il était un autre, alors qu'il se joue lui-même et qu'en ce faisant, il extériorise des éléments de sa réalité psychique interne, sans forcément en avoir conscience. La frontière entre le moi et le non moi, entre la réalité psychique interne et la réalité externe est toujours imprécise et c'est elle qui est mise ici au travail pour une meilleure connaissance et perception de soi. Dans sa recherche l'élève comédien tend vers l'accomplissement (toujours en devenir) de son être en même temps que de son personnage et son corps masqué donne naissance à un monstre inventé qui l'exprime dans sa vérité singulière. Comme dans les fêtes du Moyen-Âge,

«le masque social est ici ôté, non pas pour retrouver l'innocence d'une nature originaire que cherchait Rousseau, mais au contraire pour rendre manifeste l'opacité de l'être, la force et le désordre de ses pulsions, et, comme chez Sade, la hantise d'obsessions jusqu'alors inavouées.»¹⁰

Le masque qui entoure son corps, loin de le limiter, lui permet de découvrir ses frontières pour les travailler et de développer les forces en lui qui sont centrifuges. Découvrant les limites qui le définissent, il (re)découvre ses ouvertures qui permettent la communication avec l'extérieur : trous du

⁸ PICON-VALLIN (B), *opus cité*, p. 131.

⁹ GAGNEBIN (M) *La fascination de la laideur, l'en-deça psychanalytique du laid*, Seyssel, éd. Champ Vallon, 1994, p. 33.

¹⁰ RIBON (M), *opus cité*, p. 145.

visage, trous du corps. Ces lieux de passage entre le monde extérieur et son propre intérieur sont alors mis en jeu dans une exagération positive. On retrouve là aussi bien la truculence bien connue de Rabelais que la verve de Tabarin¹¹ qui demande: «*Quelles sont les différences de l'amour?*»¹² »pour finalement conclure devant le Maître scandalisé (qui tient un discours emphatique sur «l'Amour *carnatif*, de la race des Dieux» et «l'amour *mangeatif* qui est terrestre») qu'entre l'amour *carnatif* de l'homme amoureux et l'amour *mangeatif* de l'homme affamé, la différence n'est pas plus grande que la distance qui sépare les yeux de la bouche, puisque l'un entre par les yeux et sort par la *porte de devant*, l'autre entre par la bouche et sort par la *porte de derrière*, et qu'entre ces deux portes la distance n'est pas plus grande qu'entre les yeux et la bouche.

La constante mise en équivalence du haut et du bas, caractéristique du grotesque est (re)découverte, consciencisée puis sciemment utilisée par les élèves comédiens à partir de ce corps inventé, «fictif». Plutôt qu'un abaissement «moral» de l'humain, c'est la mise à jour des pulsions qui s'accomplit et quand on pense aux conflits entre les forces vives de l'individu et les impératifs sociaux auxquels il est soumis on ne doit pas être surpris des chemins détournés et des formes que les pulsions empruntent pour se révéler. Le problème n'est pas ici de juger de la moralité, de la vulgarité ou de la violence, mais bien d'expérimenter des formes extrêmes. Cette première expérience de métamorphose volontaire permet aux élèves de se libérer de la honte de leurs propres formes. Leur conception des relations du corps au monde se modifie. Ce premier travail les sollicite aussi bien d'un point de vue physique que psychologique et imaginaire et leur permet de découvrir la richesse des formes hypertrophiées ainsi que leur puissance métaphorique.

Puissance dramatique du corps grotesque

Après cette étape, dont le but était de pouvoir aborder le grotesque de façon positive et de l'assumer, l'élève travaille à la déformation de parties du corps choisies en fonction de ce qu'il veut alors explorer. Il s'agit d'accentuer (ou de déplacer) des parties du corps réel ou fantasmé (avec des mousses). Le plaisir de faire l'expérience de ce qu'il est possible de tirer de la forme ébauchée par l'association inattendue, parfois involontaire et formée en dehors de toute idée préconçue est un des moteurs de l'atelier qui

¹¹ Tabarin : troupe de trois farceurs qui triomphèrent à Paris de 1618 à 1626.

¹² AVENTIN (G), *Oeuvres complètes de TABARIN*, Paris, Jannet, 1858, tome 1, p. 66.

permet à l'inventivité propre à l'esprit grotesque de s'épanouir dans des corps et des attitudes extra-quotidiens.

«La nouveauté inattendue, la fantaisie prolixe et la liberté capricieuse d'une imagination dont l'oeuvre de J. Bosch à la Renaissance offrira la plus éclatante floraison.»¹³

Pour cette partie du travail, afin de construire leurs corps et pour en explorer les potentialités dramatiques, les élèves comédiens disposent d'une iconographie sur le grotesque comportant des reproductions de peintres aux oeuvres violentes, théâtrales, comme par exemple J. Bosch, Brueghel et Goya, avec lesquels Artaud voulait que le théâtre rivalise.

«Toutes ces peintures sont à double sens, et en dehors de leur côté purement pictural elles comportent un enseignement et révèlent des aspects mystérieux ou terribles de la nature et de l'esprit.»¹⁴

Les particularités physiques du grotesque telles qu'elles sont explorées dans l'atelier se répartissent alors en plusieurs catégories :

– Les déformations, qu'elles soient digestives (hypertrophie du ventre et des fesses, parfois accompagnée d'un épaissement de toute la silhouette), sexuelles (hypertrophie des caractères sexuels), motrices (difformité de la structure osseuse : bosses et corps prolongé).

– Les déplacements, additions ou suppressions d'organes ou de parties entraînant une modification des proportions normales du corps : tête dans le ventre, corps siamois, corps sans cou, corps avec des organes virils à la place des bras ou des seins, jambes commençant aux genoux avec un ventre arrivant, lui, aux genoux, etc.

Après avoir construit, sculpté un nouveau corps, l'élève travaille à sentir imaginativement ses déformations, ses aberrations, à explorer ce corps au niveau de ses fonctions motrices (pousser, tirer, tenir), digestives (avalier, rejeter, retenir), sexuelles (pénétrer, engloutir, expulser), nourricières (appel à la sexualité comme agent de fécondité) et de leur manifestations. La démesure physique s'accompagne d'un travail d'accentuation du mouvement, de la voix, de l'action et de la manière dont l'action est traitée (rythme, forme de l'action, style). La démesure, recherche et conquête de l'absolu, exalte la réalité de l'appétit physique, porteur de grande cruauté (au sens où Artaud l'entendait) et est un des thèmes privilégiés du travail corporel sur le grotesque.

Ces corps grotesques, langues tirées, yeux écarquillés montrent la vitalité d'un besoin qui tient peu compte de l'objet requis pour son assouvisse-

¹³ RIBON (M), *opus cité*, p. 111.

¹⁴ ARTAUD, *Le théâtre et son double*, Paris, éd. Gallimard, col. Idées, 1983, Lettres sur le langage, p. 187.

ment. Les yeux exorbités semblent ne pas voir, mais ne sont-ils pas poussés de l'intérieur par une force trop longtemps contenue et qui cherche à se libérer ? Soulignée à propos de l'oeuvre de Bosch l'absence de communication avec les autres est un aspect essentiel du personnage grotesque. Chaque personnage est seul, ignorant son voisin, semblant ignorer même l'action qui se déroule autour de lui.

«Ils (les yeux) expriment la vie purement individuelle, et en quelque sorte interne, ayant son existence propre, de l'homme, laquelle ne compte guère pour le grotesque. Celui-ci ne s'intéressant qu'aux yeux exorbités (...), puisqu'il s'intéresse à tout ce qui sort, fait saillie, dépasse du corps. (...) de plus les yeux exorbités intéressent le grotesque parce qu'il attestent une tension purement corporelle.»¹⁵

Des images surgissent, montrant l'ambivalence de l'être : image de la maternité paternelle, à côté de celle de la mère phallique, image de corps mi-humain/mi-animal, image du corps absorbant jusqu'aux limites de ses capacités, dont Ubu est un exemple fort.

«Ubu a conservé le besoin de satisfaire sans délai ses instincts. C'est un ventre qui absorbe tout ce qui se trouve à sa portée au propre comme au figuré, l'or aussi bien que la merde, l'un étant le substitut de l'autre, comme l'enseigne Freud.»¹⁶

Le travail du grotesque permet l'engagement de la personne dans sa réalité non pas psychologique, mais pulsionnelle, revendicative, exigeante et cruelle. Il touche aux limites corporelles et mentales, décale et révèle la pensée, privilégie l'irrespect des conventions et permet ainsi d'accroître la possibilité de liberté et de jeu nécessaire au comédien qui doit pouvoir penser et vivre de manière ouverte pour découvrir et connaître toutes les virtualités humaines, lui, dont c'est la tâche de les représenter y compris dans leurs aspects les plus noirs.

Dans ce travail le fantasme de toute puissance est à l'oeuvre, ce qui explique d'une part la jouissance du comédien qui entreprend cette recherche et d'autre part l'inquiétude du non initié, car la difformité suppose la référence à une forme qui est pervertie et dont le résultat remet en question l'ordre des choses. Pour les jeunes comédiens, l'aspect transgressif, qui leur permet (le temps du jeu, dans un cadre structurant de recherche) d'exister en libérant leurs pulsions, abordant tous les interdits, se riant de la «père mission», est un élément important du travail si l'on comprend bien que la transgression est jouée et non réelle. La fonction cathartique du tra-

¹⁵ BAKHTINE (M), *opus cité*, p. 315.

¹⁶ BEHAR (H), *La culture potachique à l'assaut du symbolisme*, revue *Europe*, mars-avril 1981, p. 28.

vail théâtral, telle que Moréno¹⁷ l'a mise en oeuvre à partir du cas »Barbara« , officie et conduit les comédiens à développer une conscience plus aigüe d'eux-mêmes à partir de personnages.

Le corps grotesque dans l'art (et peut-être davantage dans l'art théâtral, où le corps est présent en chair et en os) questionne non seulement la conception de l'homme, mais aussi l'esprit qui a sous-tendu son évolution depuis la renaissance et a modifié la conception de son rapport aux autres et au monde. Ainsi que l'écrivait Artaud,

«la création et la vie elle-même ne se définissent que par une sorte de rigueur, donc de cruauté foncière qui mène les choses à leur fin inéluctable, quel qu'en soit le prix.»¹⁸

Capable de restituer avec force tous les conflits qui dorment en nous, le corps grotesque au théâtre assume la fonction du théâtre tel qu'il la définissait

«Le théâtre bouscule le repos des sens, libère l'inconscient comprimé, pousse à une sorte de révolte virtuelle et qui d'ailleurs ne peut avoir tout son prix qui si elle demeure virtuelle, impose aux collectivités rassemblées une attitude héroïque et difficile.»¹⁹

Paradoxalement, en exhibant un corps aux formes hypertrophiées, qui semble tout exprimer de ses pulsions, le corps grotesque crie son manque à être, car un être n'existe aux autres qu'en vertu d'une part de lui qu'il refuse de livrer, et qui, défiant toute prise, déclenche le désir. Or le corps grotesque se livre : il révèle une »vérité« qui pousse à la réflexion. L'artiste du grotesque signifie par son oeuvre l'opposition entre la réalité et l'idéal et il la magnifie. Par la déformation de l'apparence de l'être, l'essentiel surgit et cela ébranle car la corporéité, située du côté de l'inavouable est révélée soudain comme étant synchroniquement légitime et obscène. Ce n'est pas la difformité qui est obscène, mais le regard porté dessus, car l'émergence de l'animalité dans l'humain réfléchit l'inadéquation de l'homme à son désir et cela est insupportable. Toute extériorisation paroxystique est dérangeante, voire obscène. Mais au bout du compte, c'est le regard du spectateur qui en décelant l'innommable sera en position d'obscénité. Il ne sera pas alors question de soulagement cathartique, mais bien plutôt d'un choc violent le mettant à découvert sans complaisance, et ce qui est aussi très intense et angoissant, sans jugement. Il ne lui restera plus qu'à accepter cette vérité, à moins de fermer les yeux et de se trouver dans la position des aveugles de

¹⁷ MORÉNO (J.L.), *Théâtre de la spontanéité*, Paris, éd. Épi, 1984.

¹⁸ ARTAUD (A), *opus cité*, Troisième lettre sur la cruauté, p. 160.

¹⁹ ARTAUD (A), *opus cité*, p. 40.

Ghelderode²⁰ qui veulent ignorer la vérité, rester dans leur état d'errance et refusent ainsi l'aide du borgne Lamprido.

²⁰ GHELDERODE (M), *Les aveugles*, Paris, Gallimard, 1979, p. 64; pièce écrite à partir du tableau de Brueghel l'ancien, et dans laquelle les aveugles ne veulent pas sortir de cet état d'errance provoqué par la cécité.

Simo Säätelä
Between Intellectualism and »Somaesthetics«

Contemporary philosophical aesthetics, as well as philosophy in general, is characterized by a loss of faith in various objectivist and foundationalist ideals. Having increasingly freed itself from its traditional aim to find foundations, essences, and necessities, philosophy has become *anti-foundationalist*, challenging the traditional conception that philosophy should provide immutable grounds for human knowledge and practices. Anti-foundationalism says that such grounds are neither available nor required (see Shusterman 1997b, 157). There are, however, different opinions as to what form such anti-foundationalism should take. My aim is to take a look at some ways to understand anti-foundationalism within aesthetics, and a focus for my presentation is given by the recent work of Richard Shusterman, who has, in a number of papers and books, discussed these issues as a part of his efforts to construe a neo-pragmatist aesthetics.

Interpretation

Perhaps the most influential version of anti-foundationalism is associated with something that could be called the »interpretive turn« in contemporary philosophy (see Hiley, Bohman & Shusterman 1991). Especially within recent Anglo-American philosophy this turn to interpretation and hermeneutics has been welcomed as an antidote to various forms of empiricism, and it is characteristic of different versions of »post-analytic« philosophy. This way of understanding the lessons of anti-foundationalism is to say that interpretation »goes all the way«; there are no »brute facts« or any immediate access to reality. Everything we understand is, the argument goes, in one way or another mediated through our interpretations or »cognitive schemes«. Consequently, the idea is that we do not only interpret things or texts that are somehow obscure or ambiguous, but that »interpretation begins at home« (to use Donald Davidson's phrase). This amounts to claiming that *all* intelligent behaviour, even our relation to our native tongue and thus to the world is based on interpretation.

Shusterman has characterised such a view as *hermeneutic universalism* and defines it as follows: it is the view that »simply to perceive, read, understand, or behave intelligently at all is already, and must always be, to interpret« (Shusterman 1991, 102).

This kind of universalism builds upon the idea of the hermeneutic circle in its most general sense: all understanding is interpretation, and every new interpretation always presupposes an already interpreted starting point. Thus we have no recourse to an »uninterpreted reality« outside the circle, and our horizon or perspective always already limits our understanding.¹ What we should insist on is the »universality of the hermeneutic problem«.

The central argument for »hermeneutic universalism« goes as follows:

1) all understanding is linguistic and

2) all linguistic understanding entails interpretation or »decoding« of signs (see Shusterman 1991, 115).

Interpretation, in short, is seen as some kind of explanation of how we can understand language (and thereby other people, art, etc.). The major problem with this kind of view is that the use of such an expansive notion of interpretation either

a) makes »interpretation« an empty catch-all word (by making it impossible to contrast understanding and interpretation), or

b) over-intellectualises our understanding of language as well as of art by modelling it on the interpretation of difficult texts with hidden meanings.

As Shusterman (1991, 113) points out, such hermeneutic universalism is a version of what John Dewey called »intellectualism«, and which he considered a major problem of Western philosophy. In his paper »Beneath Interpretation« (1991) Shusterman shows how some of the main arguments for such universalism can be confronted. He maintains that interpretation is characteristically linguistic, whereas understanding is often tacit: »while understanding is frequently a matter of [...] unproblematic handling of what we encounter, interpretation characteristically involves a problem situation« (Shusterman 1991, 126). Here Shusterman is partly drawing on Wittgenstein, who insists on the intrinsic problem-solving character of interpretation by contrasting it to immediate understanding.

¹ A major Continental background influence here is of course Nietzsche, whose perspectivism and idea of there being »no facts, only interpretations« is frequently cited in support of different forms of hermeneutic universalism (cf. Shusterman 1991, 103). On the analytic side, the influence of Quine's idea of radical translation is difficult to overestimate. This odd couple should make us realise that there are enormous differences among the philosophical views Shusterman subsumes under the title of hermeneutic universalism; there are, however, also interesting and surprising similarities between them.

What Shusterman (1991, 104) argues is that »interpretation is better served by letting it leave room for something else (beneath or before it)«. What then, is this »something« beneath or before interpretation? Shusterman suggests that it can be characterised as our somatic experience. But he also uses the term »reaction« to characterise a way of understanding that is not an interpretation.²

Experience

Shusterman wants to counter the claims of hermeneutic universalism by developing a pragmatist anti-foundationalism: he wants to emphasize the role of spontaneous reactions and instinctive behaviour as indicative of understanding, and to contrast this with interpretation. So far I am in agreement with Shusterman: however, I think he gets into serious problems when he goes on to equate this idea of reaction and immediate understanding with that of an experience.

Shusterman wishes to make a case for »prereflective, nonlinguistic experience and understanding« (Shusterman 1991, 119). This kind of experience, Shusterman thinks, is best thematized in classical pragmatism, and especially in Dewey's philosophy. Shusterman starts his apology for Dewey in *Pragmatist Aesthetics* (1992), and has continued this rehabilitation in his most recent publications, a paper called (ironically) »The End of Aesthetic Experience« (Shusterman 1997a) and his new book *Practicing Philosophy: Pragmatism and the Philosophical Life* (Shusterman 1997b).

Dewey's philosophy, Shusterman (1997b, 171) thinks, expresses »pragmatism's traditional concern with the somatic and non-discursive«, and it is this tradition that he wants to rehabilitate. Continuing on the lines of Dewey, Shusterman insists that what is beneath or before interpretation is, in the last instance, our somatic existence, what Dewey calls »animal life below the human scale«, or the »live creature« that interacts with the world. This interaction, both Dewey and Shusterman think, is best characterised as »experience«.

In Dewey's spirit Shusterman claims that the involvement of the embodied subject with the world is at its clearest when art and the aesthetic are concerned. Thus it is precisely in terms of the aesthetic and the somatic that

² An interpretation, Shusterman (1991, 127) says, characteristically expresses itself in a linguistic form; »understanding, on the other hand, does not require linguistic articulation. A proper reaction ... may be enough to indicate that one has understood.«

the notion of experience should be articulated (Shusterman 1997b, 161). This is because »the aesthetic is central to the realm of experienced value« as Shusterman (1997b, 166) puts it.

This, Shusterman thinks, is something that especially analytic aesthetics has missed, since it has concentrated almost entirely on questions of semantics and demarcation (i.e., the meaning and »languages« of art and the definition of art). In most analytical aesthetics, Shusterman (1997a, 38) claims, »felt experience is virtually ignored and entirely subordinated to third-person semantic theories of artistic symbolization and its interpretation.«

Shusterman, instead, wants to argue for what he calls the »phenomenological« and »evaluative« dimensions of aesthetic experience and to connect them to an emphasis on the somatic, non-conceptual dimensions of non-interpretative understanding. Thus, it is the subjectively felt, »satisfyingly heightened, absorbing, meaningful and affective experience« (1997a, 38) that is important and that we should emphasize instead of the physical objects of that experience, Shusterman says. This, of course, echoes Dewey's *Art as Experience*.

I am mainly sympathetic with Shusterman's aims, but skeptical of his attempts to rehabilitate the notion of an »experience«. I think that by using this term he just takes over Dewey's philosophical problems. As we know, it is precisely Dewey's appeal to »experience« that has been considered problematic, even among philosophers sympathetic to his project. For instance Richard Rorty says that Dewey should have »dropped the term 'experience'« instead of making it the centre of his philosophy (Rorty 1994, 60; cited in Shusterman 1997b, 158). Rorty (correctly, I think) considers Dewey's appeal to experience a kind of foundationalism: Dewey claims for example that immediate experience is the »underlying quality« which is the regulative principle in all thinking (see Shusterman 1997b, 165). Shusterman acknowledges these traits of foundationalism in Dewey, but he thinks that he can show how to disentangle the idea of experience from foundationalism. Unfortunately I do not think he is successful in this attempt, and while I agree with Shusterman's criticism of hermeneutic universalism (as a species of intellectualism) I do also agree with Rorty and others who think that the notion of »experience« is hopelessly confused.

Especially in his newest book Shusterman goes too far in his urge to combat the intellectualism of traditional philosophy. Shusterman says that we should give up the resistance to »non-discursive soma« and thematize, in philosophy, this somatic dimension of our being-in-the-world. So far, I have no argument with him. I also think he might have a point when he says that

philosophy can and should become »transformational instead of foundational«, that is, a kind of »cultural criticism that aims to reconstruct our practices and institutions so as to improve the experienced quality of our lives« (Shusterman 1997b, 157). However, Shusterman then goes on to identify this »experienced quality« with somatic experience, which can be improved by different »bodily practices« (he mentions, for example, the Alexander technique, bodybuilding, aerobics, etc.). These bodily practices, he claims, aim at »a better harmony of lived experience«. Shusterman even wants to »integrate such bodily disciplines into the very practice of philosophy« making philosophy »a discipline of embodied life« as he puts it (ibid., 176). Thus he concludes that »improved experience, not originary truth, is the ultimate philosophical goal and criterion« (ibid., 157). Shusterman further thinks that such bodily, immediate experience is best articulated through the aesthetic. He has even figured out a name for this newly somatic, aesthetic philosophical practice: he calls it *somaesthetics*.

While I can appreciate Shusterman's missionary zeal and regard his writing as a kind of manifesto (which explains the rhetorical exaggeration) I do not think he is philosophically convincing. Ironically enough he is very persuasive when criticizing the vestiges of foundationalism in Dewey, but when it comes to developing an alternative he offers his »somaesthetics« more or less without argument. Indeed, as we shall presently see, when he attempts to philosophically elaborate the notion of »experience« he becomes deeply enmeshed in the kind of dualisms he attempts to free philosophy from, and is driven dangerously close to something that could be called »somatic foundationalism«. That is, he is not content with wanting to thematize the bodily dimension of our life, but wants to make it the prime focus both of philosophy and of life. However, here he makes a mistake: a criticism of intellectualism does not mean that we should have to embrace its diametric opposite and assert the primacy of the soma. Actually, Shusterman makes the same kind of mistake as the hermeneutic universalists, only the other way around.

Shusterman, by appealing to the aesthetic experience, tries to assert something that Richard Wollheim has called »the supremacy of life over art«. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with this view, but as Wollheim notes, the problem with it is to »understand ... the idea in such a way as to fall neither into triviality or error« (Wollheim 1980, 99-100). However, I think that some of Shusterman's views are both trivial and erroneous; the main reason for this is the way he drives a wedge between the intellect and the soma, in a very classical dualist manner, in spite of his lip-service to the opposite.

Shusterman is right when saying that we should realise the importance of the non-discursive and somatic dimension of our interaction with the world, and that it is especially important when we are concerned with the philosophy of art and aesthetics. Nevertheless, I do not think we have to follow Shusterman's somatic turn and equate the uninterpreted with somatic experience. The reason for this is that there is a philosophically viable middle road between hermeneutic universalism and somatic foundationalism, between intellectualism and »somaesthetics«, and this is, perhaps not very surprisingly, to be found in the later philosophy of Wittgenstein.

Let me, in the time that remains, briefly outline some main points of such an alternative. Wittgenstein is, as we already mentioned, an ardent critic of the kind of intellectualism that is manifested as hermeneutic universalism. But I think he can also give an alternative to Dewey's and Shusterman's pragmatist philosophy of experience. In this context, this alternative can best be sketched out by elaborating the term »reaction«.

Reaction

How then, is this alternative to be understood?

Let us first look at Wittgenstein's relation to the claims of hermeneutic universalism. It is clear that Wittgenstein is opposed to the idea that understanding always is, or requires, interpretation. Establishing a contrast between immediate understanding and interpretation is very important for Wittgenstein, since it is central for instance to what he says about the concept of »following a rule«; there certainly is such a thing as a way of acting that is grounded in interpretation, but not all rule-following can be understood in such a way – instead, there must be cases where we follow the rule unhesitatingly, without any interpretation (see, e.g., Wittgenstein 1958, § 201).

Wittgenstein thus opposes what could be called the mythology of interpretation: the view that linguistic understanding must always be a matter of decoding or interpreting. Wittgenstein's way of countering this mythology is to say that language cannot be based on thinking. Rather, it is grounded in our forms of life, in our instinctive behaviour and natural reactions – that is, our embodied existence as a certain kind of creature. He says that we do »naturally« understand certain rules just by being given examples, just as we naturally understand a pointing gesture; »and understanding here means reacting« (Wittgenstein 1969a, 141). No act of inner, laborious interpretation is involved.

What is even more interesting from our point of view is that Wittgenstein also makes a similar point in his lectures on aesthetics, where he says: »Perhaps the most important thing in connection with aesthetics is what may be called aesthetic reactions« (Wittgenstein 1966, 13). There would be much to say about the idea of aesthetic reactions (see further Säätelä 1995 & Säätelä 1998, ch. 3), but what I want to emphasize here is that Wittgenstein's use of this notion must be seen as a way pointing out that our primary relation to art and other aesthetic phenomena cannot be an interpretative one. However, this does not mean that Wittgenstein is ignoring the role of reason and thinking in the arts or in our lives.

Even though critical of hermeneutic universalism, Wittgenstein is to large extent in accord with the central insights of hermeneutic philosophy, for instance when insisting on the importance of a context or horizon for our understanding of, for instance, a sentence or sign. In fact, Wittgenstein also claims that art and artistic appreciation, in a very similar way as language, can only be made sense of by placing it in the cultural context to which it belongs and which shapes it.

However, Wittgenstein does not accept the idea of endless interpretation, implicit in the idea of the hermeneutic circle. Instead, the context prerequisite for understanding is given to us by ways of behaving and reacting, and ultimately by a form of life. This means that no object can be properly understood if we cannot in one way or another participate in the complicated set of activities or practices to which it belongs. In this sense practice, or ways of reacting and acting, give us the horizon within which an object becomes meaningful. This is what has been called Wittgenstein's »one-step hermeneutics«.³ Instead of a circularity of interpretation, we have a circularity between understanding and doing, that is, participating in the relevant practices. Thus the »oscillations of hermeneutical theory are short-circuited« (Ackermann 1988, 18) when we reach a way of grasping that is not an interpretation, that is, when we have reached action or reaction. In the case of aesthetics and appreciation of art, this stopping point can be called an aesthetic reaction. When we, in a particular case, have reached aesthetic reactions, the question of interpretation does not arise any more.

When it comes to aesthetics and art this demand for participation means a demand that we submit ourselves to the object and react to what we perceive. This demand for an immediate reaction also means that the

³ This term is introduced by Robert Ackermann, who maintains that »Wittgenstein's key to philosophical analysis was to discover a network of clear horizons of understanding that are implicit in our language« (Ackermann 1988, 9).

significance of art and other aesthetic phenomena cannot be appreciated from some externalised interpretative distance.

Experience or Reaction?

This kind of view (as Wittgenstein indeed himself points out in a different context) begins to sound like pragmatism⁴, and this way of putting the Wittgensteinian position shows that it indeed has many affinities with Shusterman's criticism of hermeneutic universalism. However, an important difference between this view and such a pragmatism is that Wittgenstein is very careful of not resorting to talk about »experience« in this context. And this is not merely a verbal quibble or a matter of choosing different words to describe the same phenomenon.

The main differences between Shusterman's and Dewey's appeal to experience and the Wittgensteinian appeal to reactions become clear if we look closer at the job these notions are supposed to do in their argument. As we mentioned before, Shusterman quite convincingly brings out some serious philosophical problems in Dewey's appeal to experience. However, when we look closer at Shusterman's own use of this term, we find that he in fact repeats Dewey's mistakes. This is clearly to be seen in a thought-experiment that Shusterman introduces in his paper »The End of Aesthetic Experience«. Here Shusterman wants us to imagine a science-fiction situation, where we are confronted with »two visually identical art viewers who offer identical interpretations of the very powerful paintings and poems before them«. One of these art viewers is a human being, while the other is a »cyborg«,⁵ and the only difference between these two is that the »cyborg« lacks the human capacity to feel (Shusterman 1997a, 37). This means that »even if the cyborg's interpretative propositions were descriptively more accurate than the human being's, we would still say that the human's general response to art was superior and that the cyborg, since he feels absolutely nothing, does not really grasp what art is all about« (ibid., 38).

Now, Shusterman's science fiction story is rather feeble, but I think he is after an important point when emphasizing that works of art make de-

⁴ Wittgenstein 1969, § 422. He does, however, add the following remark: »here I am being thwarted by a kind of *Weltanschauung*«.

⁵ Shusterman in fact messes up the science-fiction terminology here. What he wants to talk about is not a cyborg, which is a cybernetic organism (in this case a human whose normal biological capability is enhanced by cybernetic devices), but rather an android, a robot which can be thought of as a »visually indiscernible« replica of a human being.

mands our capacities for feeling, understanding and response and that we must submit to these demands in order to appreciate art. The problem is that his preoccupation with »experience« leads him astray. In Shusterman's fable the only difference between these »indiscernible« art viewers is the capacity to feel, but it is precisely this capacity that makes the human being's response to art »superior« to that of the »cyborg's«. However, this capacity is described only in terms of a qualitative difference of experience, which is further understood as some sort of introspectively available private occurrence.

Indeed, Shusterman's attempt to elaborate the idea of »aesthetic experience« by using this story shows that he inherits all the philosophical problems that Dewey struggled with: an experience, for Shusterman, is some kind of ineffable and private sensation that must be characterised in purely phenomenological terms (he talks about »feeling or savoring art's qualia « [ibid., 37]).

Shusterman's main problem is that

1) he thinks that the appreciation of a work or an object consists in the object's inducing or causing in us a certain experience,

2) and then conceives of this experience in abstraction from the work or object that gives rise to it.

The result is that the value of a work or object is conceived of as residing in its *effects*, and these effects are thought to have a nature independent of the object that causes them.⁶ Thus Shusterman thinks that what is valuable about the aesthetic experience is precisely its immediate phenomenological and somatic characteristics, the »heightened awareness«, the »experience of qualia«, and so on.

But this way of representing artistic or aesthetic value is certainly mistaken. There is nothing wrong in saying that the only way of appreciating a work of art is to experience it with understanding, but this does *not* mean something like »experiencing the qualia« of the work. Instead, what is important is that we react to the object in a way that shows that we understand. In fact, Wittgenstein's criticism of the idea of »private« languages and objects can be directly applied to Shusterman's appeal to »aesthetic experience«. If Wittgenstein is correct, as I think he is, we should not expect phenomenological studies of experiences, which are grounded on the first-person case, to be helpful here; instead we must ask about the publicly observable criteria for the application of terms such as »experience«. Moreover, these criteria cannot be found by an introspective investigation of our own

⁶ This means that Shusterman is repeating a mistake that is characteristic of classical expression theories of art (cf. Budd 1992, 445).

phenomenal experience; instead, we need a conceptual inquiry that issues in grammatical remarks. Wittgenstein's appeal to reactions must be understood as such a grammatical remark, also in the context of aesthetics.

A reaction is something that befalls us and has certain phenomenal and somatic qualities; and in this respect it could be described as an experience. However, when Wittgenstein talks about aesthetic reactions, he makes a very important additional point: he says that such reactions are not merely experiences or feelings, but that they are directed towards an object (i.e., they take on an intentional object). This means that the reaction, even if it is an immediate experience, *cannot* be considered in abstraction of its object. It is not merely a private sensation or experience of qualia, but manifested by what we are prepared to say or do about the object. Consequently, what makes a reaction an *aesthetic* reaction is its context and its directedness toward an object of a peculiar kind, not, as Shusterman suggests, the phenomenal characteristics of the experience itself.

If we concentrate on experiences, we risk ending up talking about the effects of objects on subjects. In contrast, the notion of aesthetic *reactions* makes it possible to take note both of the »phenomenological« and the »semantic« (or the »somatic« and »intellectual«) sides of our relation to works of art and other objects of aesthetic interest. Thus we could conclude by saying that Wittgenstein has both a therapeutic and an descriptive end in mind when reminding us of the importance of our reactions, since this notion (if rightly and fully elaborated) makes it possible to describe the important role of the aesthetic in our lives without relapsing either into the intellectualism of hermeneutic universalism or the foundationalism of somaesthetics.

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Karin Fry
Preserving the Subject

Immanuel Kant founds his artistic theory on the model of the aesthetic genius who creates art works that can be universally declared to be beautiful. In order to qualify as genius, the artist necessarily possesses both formal training, which is learned, and innate originality, which cannot be taught. Interestingly, Julia Kristeva parallels this model with her use of the symbolic and the semiotic. This paper will examine the correspondence between Kant's notion of the artistic genius, and Kristeva's theory of art, and the differing implications of each position. Kant's system is based upon a unified ego which can conclusively judge the status of an art work. Kant seeks to universally classify certain art works as beautiful, and founds this universality of judgment on the biologically predetermined talent of the genius. Kristeva rejects Kant's hierarchy of the genius and prioritizes the subjectivity of the creative process, rather than the beautiful status of the art product. Kristeva's fragmented subject re-engages with the symbolic through art to recapture meaning that has been lost due to the overwhelming universal. The universal status of both the work of art and the talent of the genius are denied, and lose their importance. The priority, for Kristeva, is to allow the artist to escape the totalizing universal of the symbolic, while simultaneously recognizing its importance in the constitution of the subject.

Kant's Artist as Genius

In the *Critique of Pure Judgement*, Immanuel Kant bases his aesthetic theory on the definition of the artist as genius. The aesthetic genius creates fine art which incites the imagination and understanding to free play, without the use of concepts. The beautiful object promotes a subjective universal response to the work. The reaction to the work is subjective because it concerns the feelings and does not involve concepts, but universal because the response will be the same for all, provided that one has not developed poor emotional habits. Exclusively, the genius alone is able to create the objects that promote the universal judgment of beauty in the viewer. However, the artist does not contribute personally to the work, or seek to com-

municate to the viewer. The genius' contribution is restricted to actualizing the beautiful and is guided by this telos.

Kant's genius is composed of two determinative aspects. The artistic genius must possess taste, which is the formal training that orders the work. This technically trained skill structures the art work and provides the means by which the artist can produce the beautiful product. However, the more fundamental aspect that defines the artist as genius is inborn originality. Kant describes this talent as »...the innate mental aptitude (*«ingenium»*) through which nature gives the rule to art.«¹ Because the beautiful does not have a concept, the genius' originality also cannot fall under a concept that can be explained or taught. Consequently, the artist does not understand the process of creation or where the ideas that guide the work arise from. Kant believes both aspects, originality and skill, are necessary for the success of the genius. Mechanical art lacks originality and cannot be considered fine art because it is merely technical skill and is spiritless. However, this technical skill is needed because the genius cannot guide the originality towards the beautiful without it. The genius' works serve as models of creativity to other artists, but these works cannot be merely copied or imitated. They can only point the way towards what an art work should be like. Individuals must find their own expression of this ineffable talent, if they possess it. Kant stresses that genius is rare because innate originality belongs only to a few.

Symbolic and Semiotic

Julia Kristeva asserts that there is more to aesthetic theory than restrictive definitions of the artist, or the art work they are able to produce. In order to understand her aesthetic thought, it is necessary to address her overall project. Kristeva founds subjectivity on a psychoanalytic model, and although psychoanalysis may be problematic, its difficulties are beyond the scope of this paper. Kristeva believes that initially, the infant is unable to conceptualize itself as different from its mother. In the mirror stage, the child recognizes its separateness, but this is based on the illusion that it is independent, when in actuality it is still dependent on the »mother« or the primary caregiver for survival. In thethetic stage, the child begins to actively use language, and external objects are now posited as different from the child and are thematized. The child can conceptualize the difference between itself and outside objects and language verbalizes this difference. Although the child

¹ Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Judgement*, trans. James Creed Meredith (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952) 168.

is always already in a world of language, it is here that the child uses it for the first time to express personal needs to the mother who is now recognized as separate. The symbolic, or what Kristeva calls the law of the »father« becomes actively a part of the child. The symbolic is not only language, but the cultural norms and laws of society.

However, the symbolic is not totally adequate because the engagement with the formal structures of language cannot express all that one needs to say. Kristeva believes there are preverbal rhythms and gestures in signification which she names the semiotic. Through the semiotic, affect and bodily drives are present in language. Although ineffable, the semiotic is what drives language, while the symbolic provides the formal structure. The symbolic and the semiotic are both modalities of the same signifying process which together make up signification. The semiotic, however, is not sublated into the symbolic, but transgresses the symbolic and breeches it, rather than posits itself. Kristeva describes this as the semiotic splitting thethetic or as an explosion of the semiotic in the symbolic, and she insists this is not a Hegelian sublation. »It is, instead, a *transgression* of position, a reversed reactivation of the contradiction that instituted this very position.«² Instead of a synthesis, the expression of the semiotic is a disruption and a splitting of the symbolic. The semiotic exceeds the symbolic, and both aspects are needed for signification.

Kristeva's use of the symbolic and the semiotic are connected to her definition of the subject as a decentered, fragmented being whose borders are always uncertain. Initially, the self is not posited until there is a recognition of the otherness of the »mother.« The subject is tied to a relation with another, which eliminates a fundamental unity to subjectivity. Subjectivity is gained through the recognition of the otherness of the »mother«, but it is a subjectivity based upon a loss. There is a gap between the oneness of the ideal relation with the mother, and the recognition of the split into a separate individual. The separation itself is also based on an illusion because the child has years of dependency left with the mother. Because the subject is founded on a relation with an other and because this relation is initially based upon a fabrication, the center of the subject is always in question. Language is engaged to communicate the needs of the subject who is no longer in union with the mother, but language also reflects the fragmentation of the self. The self is made up of an aspect which is always already part of a society of laws and language, or the symbolic. However, there is particularity and uniqueness to the self that language cannot contain and the uni-

² Kristeva, Julia, *The Portable Kristeva*, ed. Kelly Oliver (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), *Revolution in Poetic Language* 55.

versal rules cannot incorporate, which is the semiotic. Kristeva suggests that the self is composed of both universal and particular aspects and the exact borders between them cannot be established.

The oppositions in Kristeva's thought, the universal and the particular, the objective and the subjective, the mind and the body, the symbolic and the semiotic are always intertwined and cannot be separated or exist without the other. »Because the subject is always *both* semiotic *and* symbolic, no signifying system he produces can be either 'exclusively' semiotic or 'exclusively' symbolic, and is instead necessarily marked by an indebtedness to both.«³ The subject is manifestly all these oppositions and it is unclear as to where the borders actually lie. Kristeva states:

The *subject* is not simply an inside facing the referential outside. The subjective structure, understood as a specific articulation of the relationship between speaking subject and Other, determines the very situation of reality, its existence or nonexistence, its overturning or hypostasis. In such a perspective, ontology becomes subordinate to the signifying structure that sustains a given subject in its transference upon the Other.⁴

Confusion concerning the location of the borders of inside and outside can lead to various psychological problems which expression or communication can alleviate. Art, for Kristeva, has to do with the relationship to language and how the subject negotiates the blurred borders of one's make-up.

Kristeva's aesthetic theory is intricately connected to the relationship between the symbolic and semiotic. In *Revolution and Poetic Language*, Kristeva explains »though absolutely necessary, the thetic is not exclusive: the semiotic, which also precedes it, constantly tears it open, and this transgression brings about all the various transformations of the signifying practice that are called 'creation'.«⁵ The artist's relationship to the symbolic in the thetic stage may not be firmly established and the symbolic can lose its meaning because the semiotic fails to be expressed. Particularly with poetic language, but also with other forms of art, the semiotic ruptures and restructures the symbolic. Poetic language transgresses the symbolic, and creates something new. The artist is then able to re-engage with the symbolic and recapture meaning, but only through creating a new relationship to language. Art is not the only remedy for the fragmented self which must signify. Kristeva believes psychotherapy and religion also provide alternative

³ Kristeva, *The Portable Kristeva, Revolution in Poetic Language* 34.

⁴ Kristeva, Julia, *Tales of Love*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987) 274.

⁵ Kristeva, *The Portable Kristeva, Revolution in Poetic Language* 50.

ways to express the conditions of a misrelation in the thetic stage. Unlike psychotherapy, aesthetic creation does not resolve the subject's condition, but provides the opportunity for catharsis, and has a political potential in its ability to transgress and transform the symbolic, or the cultural norms and laws that rule society. Two conditions of the thetic stage associated with an artistic temperament are what she calls melancholy/depression and abjection, but it must be stressed that art is not the result of a psychological problem specific to an individual, but the result of the universal condition of fragmented subjecthood.

Art as Universal vs. Art as Individual

Because creativity occurs through the signification of the symbolic and the semiotic, a striking parallel can be made to Kant's system. Even though the two theoretical positions do not perfectly map on to one another, there is general agreement towards the factors which constitute creativity. Forced to align with Kant, Kristeva's symbolic corresponds to the formal technical training of the genius that is necessary to create beautiful objects. Kant's formal rules that structure the art work correspond to Kristeva's laws of the symbolic. The innate originality of Kant's genius aligns with the semiotic. Although the semiotic is not innate for Kristeva because it is always already bound up with the symbolic, it is ineffable, like Kant's originality, and it gives the spark to the work of art that Kant describes as the soul of the work. Kant's genius as partly rule-governed and partly beyond rules, mirrors not only Kristeva's use of the symbolic and the semiotic, but also Kristeva's model of creativity which needs both particular and universal aspects that are grounded in the individual subject. Creativity for Kristeva comes about due to an inability to understand the self. The formal rules of the symbolic are the universal laws of a system which all individuals are bound up in and must use in order to engage with their society. The semiotic and Kant's originality are the ineffable particularity distinct to the individual. Kant's originality differs from the semiotic in that it only belongs to a few, and what it can accomplish is based on a universal notion of the beautiful, limiting the power of the individual. The rhythms and gestures that Kristeva speaks of, are always already within the structures of the symbolic, but retain their radically particular nature.

Obviously, Kant would deny a comparison with Kristeva's subject. Kant's subject is not fragmented, and the relation between the universal and particular aspects of the self are not founded on a split ego for Kant. Kant's

transcendental unity of apperception gathers the manifolds of intuition and the understanding into a unified self. Although this subject does not know itself in itself, it is still one distinct subject which gathers sensation and understanding together in one location and orders space and time. The unification of the self as empirically real to itself ties Kant's whole picture together. If the self is not unified, Kant's entire phenomenal world is lost.

Subsequently, the product of art between Kant and Kristeva is also different. Kant's genius expresses nothing of the self, while Kristeva's artist expresses the self more fully than anywhere else, except in psychoanalysis. Kant's genius is guided by the object of the beautiful, while Kristeva seeks to express the self through a re-engagement with the symbolic. In *Abjection, Melancholia, and Love*, John Lechte describes Kristeva's view of the art product not as the creation of an object, but more of a process which »... 'creates' the subject.«⁶ Through the art work, the artist recreates the self by expressing the fundamental contradictions of the constitution of the subject. The art object is not meaningless, because it does express mood and communicates to the viewer who may use the work for the very same therapeutic reasons. However, the priority for Kristeva always seems to be the preservation of the particularity of the individual through the work and the therapeutic and healing function of art. Rather than stress the universal beauty of an object, Kristeva is more interested in preserving the subject.

Despite their difference of approach, both Kant and Kristeva find a social function for the work of art. Kant connects the ability to judge the beautiful with opening oneself up to correct moral feelings. Observing the work of art helps individuals to align themselves with the moral law by promoting appropriate feelings. Kant uses the privileged originality of the artist to justify the universality of the beautiful object and the correct feelings it is able to produce. Why this artistic talent is rare is unexplained. The communal benefit is that we are able to open ourselves to the proper feelings in appreciating the beautiful, which will help us to guide our emotions towards acting morally and within the symbolic law. In this way, art assists the moral realm and supports the universality of the symbolic order.

Kristeva takes an opposite tack on the issue. She sees the ability of art to disrupt the symbolic in its capacity to communicate both the symbolic and the semiotic. The political worth of art is that it saves the individual from being totalized by society. The artist transgresses the symbolic, and in doing so re-engages with it. The individual artist is saved from being object, or

⁶ John Lechte, »Art, Love, and Melancholy in the Work of Julia Kristeva«, *Abjection, Melancholia, and Love: the Work of Julia Kristeva*, eds. John Fletcher and Andrew Benjamin (London: Routledge, 1990) 24.

outside the law, and is able to recapture lost meaning. For Kristeva, individuality and particularity is preserved and expressed in the work of art. Just as the goal of psychoanalysis is not to totalize the individual by telling them what they are like, but to »...help them, then, to speak and write themselves in unstable, open, undecidable spaces«,⁷ art fulfills the same function. It helps the individual to build a space of one's own. Kristeva describes each psychoanalytic treatment as unique, and in that sense, as analogous to a work of art.⁸ Likewise, the art work is unique and preserves something of the individual coming to terms with a system and world which is always already part of the subject.

The Hierarchy of the Genius

There is a hierarchy implied by Kant's notion of the genius which distinguishes the genius as superior based on innate talent which belongs only to a few. Biologically determined as superior, the genius is able to create beautiful objects provided that he trains and structures his talent. Christine Battersby correctly points out in her book *Gender and Genius* that historically, the notion of genius excludes women. The power in the word »genius« not only determines the status of a work as fine art, but was »...evoked to explain the difference between civilized man and both animals and savages.«⁹ Genius exemplified the pinnacle of human achievement. Although the concept of genius changed over time, it was based on exclusion between individuals and never included women. This logic of exclusion asserted the non-genius to be lacking, and especially so for women who never had such a potential.¹⁰ Battersby's main complaint is the term »genius« »...dress(es) up evaluation as description«,¹¹ cleverly hiding its power.

However, Battersby suggests that what is now needed is the ability to see women as geniuses. She seeks to validate female artists and render them visible, but she retains the inherently hierarchical concept of genius and adapts it to be applied to women as well. The sense she retains of the word »genius« is of a person judged against her culture or tradition and Battersby rejects all other definitions of the word as contaminated. »The genius is the

⁷ Kristeva, *Tales of Love* 380.

⁸ Kristeva, *The Portable Kristeva, New Maladies of the Soul* 217.

⁹ Battersby, Christine, *Gender and Genius* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989) 3.

¹⁰ Battersby 3.

¹¹ Battersby 10.

person whose work (a) marks the boundary between the old ways and the new within the tradition, and (b) has lasting value and significance.¹² The genius is no longer a type of elite being, but only one who stands out as compared to her culture. The term becomes evaluative instead of descriptive. Battersby claims that in order for a woman's art to be respected, she must be able to be compared with the historical and cultural context in order to situate her within the tradition. She denies a special psychological state or special class of person in tune with the unconscious, but she believes we can still praise and rank women pragmatically.

Even ignoring the pragmatic difficulty of determining talent in one's own age or what the status of an art work has over time, Battersby's definition of »genius« problematically retains its hierarchical structure. Although her view endorses a less exclusive use of the term, it seems to be sacrificing the very problem Battersby is trying to correct. Women would be rightfully recognized for their talent, but the implicit elitism of the term »genius« justifies a supposedly quick and easy categorization of individuals based on their perceived relation to the culture at large. Instead of presenting a continuum of talent that recognizes individuality, Battersby retains somewhat exclusive overtones of the genius that justify an objective categorization, and raises the status of some women while negating the status of others.

Kristeva's artistic theory allows for the possibility of treating art works and artists individually. The conception of art is similar in Kristeva and Battersby in that great art always surpasses the culture, but for Kristeva, the symbolic is disrupted in the instance of art and the culture is surpassed in an entirely different manner. Battersby's »genius« surpasses the established symbolic system of art because of the exceptional nature of the work. At the same time, the »genius« reinforces the present symbolic system and is incorporated at a higher level. Kristeva's artist ruptures the symbolic, and can actually change it. The symbolic system influences the work because it guides what cannot be said, and must be expressed in another manner, but it does not determine the quality of art in an objective manner. Artists are treated individually for Kristeva. Potentially aesthetic activity is within the reach of everyone because it is an expression of a fragmented self and a signifying system that does not always capture what we need to say. It no longer matters if art work is genius, provided that the person re-engages with society and is in some sense healed, if only cathartically. Good art allows the viewer or audience to partake in this communication, but the value of the art no longer lies entirely in the object produced.

¹² Battersby 157.

Conclusion

Kristeva does not locate art in a hierarchy of genius, but finds the source of creativity to be in the fragmented constitution of the subject. Because of the loss of the mother, and the necessary engagement with the symbolic, one creates in order to work out the problems associated with the thetic phase. Although Kristeva's structure of language as consisting of the symbolic and the semiotic correspond to Kant's twofold definition of the genius, art is not centered in the object. The more important aspect is that the artist is able to re-engage with the symbolic and simultaneously disrupt it. Art is a therapeutic expression of individuality, where, despite the fragmentation and blurred borders of the subject/object relation, something of the individual is preserved. Art provides the same function for the viewer, and in the case of literary work, »...textual experience represents one of the most daring explorations the subject can allow himself, one that delves into his constitutive process.«¹³ The importance of the art product as a universal object of beauty drops away, as well as Kant's categorization of the genius as objectively talented. Kristeva ruptures both of these categories in order to provide a therapeutic place for catharsis and healing, and a political space for action.

The implications of Kristeva's theory are important. Kant places the capacity for creativity, in the biologically determined talent of the genius. Innate talent substantiates not only the universality of the work of art and the »genius« of the artist, but bolsters a hierarchy between human beings and places limits on their thought and what they are able to achieve. Kant's universality of art is secured through a predetermined talent given only to a few. Kristeva rejects this approach. Artistic work provides therapy for an individual that is composed of the influence of the universal symbolic realm, but also retains a unique particularity which must be expressed. Individuals are not limited in what they can think, or restricted in the political structures of the symbolic that they can seek to change. However, Kristeva also recognizes the inescapability of the symbolic's influence in the construction of the self. Although the symbolic has positive aspects, the negative aspects of the symbolic are purified through the catharsis of art for an individual who has lost her relation to the symbolic and its meaning. Although Kristeva sees an alarming inability for catharsis in the art that reflects the chaos of our age, Kristeva seeks to preserve the individuality of the subject and promote a political space for change.

¹³ Kristeva, *The Portable Kristeva, Revolution in Poetic Language* 54.

Katya Mandoki
The Indispensable Excess of the Aesthetic

The excessive and the basic appear to be logically opposed. The term »excess« is commonly understood as a synonym of the superfluous and incompatible with other key categories of aesthetics such as harmony, simplicity and unity. For people who consider themselves refined, excess is almost an index of bad taste. An excess in color, in jewelry, in accessories, in ornamentation, in gloss... are either laughed at or boasted about, depending on cultural background. Excess may be embarrassingly hidden or proudly displayed, hoarded or wasted; in any case, it seems to be somehow and sometimes significantly linked to the aesthetic.

Three authors have more or less explicitly dealt with the notion of excess: Thorstein Veblen, Marcel Mauss and Georges Bataille. They all mention the aesthetic but none of them, unfortunately, deals with it in particular. The three handle the concept of consumption, but it was Bataille who worked more extensively on the idea of excess to the degree of proposing a Copernican revolution in economics. Counter to views prevalent in this field, Bataille maintained that nature obeys a pattern of excess rather than scantiness and limited resources. He stated that a living organism receives much more energy than it needs, and that this excess of energy is not only inevitable but has to be dissipated else it may become destructive and turn against the organism. The excess of sperm for a single ovule, the excess of eggs deposited by many species, the tendency to excess in vegetation, the excess of energy radiated by the sun, all illustrate this tendency to dissipation and exuberance. Leave a garden untended and it will soon overflow and fill every gap. For Bataille, this century's World Wars were the catastrophic consequence of industrial excess that was not voluntarily spent when required. I will not attempt a thorough analysis of this very controversial thesis proposed by Bataille, also incomplete in its argumentation and theoretical development. I will only deal with the idea of excess in relation to the aesthetic and examine it within the perspective of Mauss' study of archaic societies which, in fact, triggered Bataille's own conceptions.

Bataille explores how excedents are consumed in various types of societies such as the Aztec sacrificial theocracy, Moslem militarist and Lamaist monastical organizations. His work on this subject was inspired, as he ac-

knowledges, by Mauss' investigation on the Tlingit and Häida communities, particularly their *potlatch* ceremony which is a competitive destruction of excedents for generating prestige. This ceremony was named by the Chinook term *potlatch* meaning »to feed« or »to consume« (Mauss 6). As Mauss insisted, these gifts and exchange ceremonies are never voluntary, but compulsory in nature. There is an obligation to reciprocate with gifts of equal or greater value.

The hau and the aura

Mauss began an inquiry on economy and ended with an inquiry on morality. He was concerned with understanding the code behind this obligatory reciprocity: »What rule of legality and self-interest, in societies of a backward or archaic type, compels the gift that has been received to be obligatorily reciprocated? What power resides in the object given that causes its recipient to pay it back?« (Mauss 3) Remarkably, Mauss implies in the second question (»what power resides...«) a partial answer to the first: it is the belief that there is a power within objects that acts upon people and forces them to reciprocate gifts. This power is the *hau* or spirit of objects, which retain part of the soul of their maker. One must relate to this concrete presence in objects when one introduces them into one's home. The Maori people call »*hau*« this spirit that clings to an object when ownership changes. In our contemporary globalized industrial society, the idea of the *hau* seems like mere childish superstition of primitive, uncivilized people. Yet, we do not invest in an artwork unless we are sure it is genuine, even if we can't tell the difference between the original and a copy. This proves that we still believe in something similar to the *hau* of things, at least in artworks. Many people call a priest to bless a new house or a ship and organize warming parties. It is not too farfetched to associate the Maori idea of *hau* with what Walter Benjamin called the »*aura*« in the work of art. His idea of the loss of *aura* in the age of mechanical reproducibility may also explain a contemporary sense of loss of *hau* separating objects from subjects and becoming, as Marx argued, fetishes that turn against their producers in industrial production.

Another case of contemporary Western *hau* production is the so-called »car art«. Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Robert Rauschenberg, and David Hockney, among others, have each decorated a BMW car, converting an already expensive piece of machinery into an even more expensive work of art. These vehicles must now be carefully packed and transported before

ending up motionless, on display in art exhibits worldwide. Between the car and the artwork, the difference is the *hau* of the artist who painted it. This spirit is what, in archaic societies, demands reciprocation, and in modern societies justifies a price unrelated to the amount of labor invested in or any benefit derived from the object.

Total services and contrasting pulse

Mauss found among the communities of the American Northwest what he termed »total social phenomena« which means that »all kinds of institutions are given expression at one and the same time – religious, juridical, and moral, which relate to both politics and the family; likewise economic ones, which suppose special forms of production and consumption, or rather of performing total services and of distribution. This is not to take into account the aesthetic phenomena to which these facts lead, and the contours of the phenomena that these institutions manifest.« (Mauss 3) Up to here we have most of what Mauss can tell us concerning the aesthetic: hardly an allusion. The other anthropologists relevant to our point (Veblen and Bataille) prove no more enlightening. What does Mauss mean by saying that these facts lead to aesthetic phenomena? I will venture an answer.

According to Mauss, certain ceremonies have to be performed because »to make a gift of something to someone is to make a present of some part of oneself... To retain that thing would be dangerous and mortal...« (Mauss 12). This belief refers to the *hau*, and seems to be a better explanation for compulsory reciprocity, which lies, therefore, not in the *hau* or spirit of the thing retained, but the act of retaining it. At issue here is the attitude towards and the regulations governing retaining or giving. This is what differentiates Western anal retentive societies from what Freud would call anal expulsive communities like the Häida and Tlingit. The difference, I contend, is a question of pulse understood as centripetal or centrifugal attitude in regard to our surroundings. There are, on one hand, societies that display centrifugal pulse and pride themselves in their power of giving away, like those communities that practice potlatch or *mayordomía*. Other societies exhibit a centripetal tendency, like Western capitalist economies, and value their power to accumulate to the degree that prestige and honor are a result of saving and hoarding wealth rather than sharing it.

Thus, the logic underlying obligatory reciprocity would appear to depend less upon the *hau* of things observed by Mauss, than upon a dynamic and communal sense of life, of the world, of work and of its products. As I

mentioned above, it is a matter of pulse and an attitude towards retention itself rather than toward what is retained. Compulsory reciprocity comes from a worldview that considers as mere common sense that we must give back what we receive, obvious in natural biological processes as breathing and eating, birth and death, sowing and reaping. The circulation of matter and energy, the movement of all things, stars, animals and light, the rivers and the sea, the changing of the seasons, all evince a pattern of abundance and dynamism, not of penury and immobility.

This holistic awareness explains the practice of reciprocity among the societies studied, seemingly not because of the belief that things have a spirit that can take revenge, but because everything must be kept in motion. To retain or to hoard is, in this context, a contra-natura attitude, equivalent to imprisoning or holding hostage an object, animal or person destined to be in motion.

The expressive, the impressive and the excessive

If Mauss and Malinowski believed they found the origins of economy and of law, of religion and morality in these patterns, I would suggest that we might also seek therein the origins of the aesthetic. Let us imagine two contending tribes in relation of potlatch, each one trying to surpass the other, each one offering greater quantities of goods, of better quality or more exceptional, brought from remoter places or made with greater talent and skill. The aesthetic impulse here resides precisely in this desire to impress. From archaic communities to Renaissance aristocrats and contemporary magnates, in all social classes, some more, others less successful, the propelling drive seems to be the same: provoking admiration, impressing others, accumulating prestige. As a consequence of this drive, we have been fortunate to inherit the treasures of monumental architecture, masterfully crafted vases from ancient Greece and China, spectacular jewels from the farthest corners of the earth, amazing plays of dramatic, epic and comic impact, magnificent rituals, murals, sculptures, musical traditions. In short, it is thanks to this need to impress that we have inherited cultural artifacts that, despite the passage of centuries and millennia, retain this power.

Together with this need to produce an impressive effect (the necessity to impress) there is also a necessity to share with others that which is deeply meaningful to us (the necessity to express). Thus, in conjunction with the impressive or the drive to impress, is the expressive drive that many aestheticians from Baumgarten to Langer, have emphasized

The exuberant and lavish always impresses, sometimes as beauty, as in Blake's saying »exuberance is beauty«, others as ugliness. Regardless of the categories involved, the excessive is somehow involved with or symptomatic of the aesthetic. Ugliness and the grotesque also result from one or another kind of excess (of fat, for instance, or of length as a long nose or chin, of width as impressive hips) and as such they are also related to the aesthetic. Excessively long fingernails, apart from symbolizing a status beyond the need of manual work, are considered aesthetic. Excessively high heels are an explicit statement that the owner not a peasant woman.

Artwork is all excessive. Ordinarily, one does not witness as concentrated and intense a development of events as are found in drama, of images, colors and forms as are seen in a painting or of sounds as are heard in a musical composition. Baroque and Gothic art are excessive in forms, Expressionism is excessive in emotions, Fauvism in color, Cubism in simultaneous perspectives, Ruben's paintings in flesh, Mannerism in the dramatization of the body. Duchamp's Anti-art statement is equally excessive (he could have chosen a chair or a table... why precisely a urinal?) Malevich and Mondrian, as well as the Minimalists like Smith and Goertitz, are all excessive in their reduction to the essential. Lucio Fontana, in his search for real space, was a bit excessive: why cut the canvas with a scalpel! Of course, excess and hyperbole are eloquent.

The cloak or wig of a judge in French and British courts, the excessive space in the lobby of official buildings, the excessively slow gait of the priests in religious liturgy, the excess of solemnity in a weekly school ceremony, are all maintained for their aesthetic effects. A jewel is always excessive in the labor it implies. A hand woven carpet, a perfume, the fermentation of fruits for liquor, all are aesthetic in that they contain something beyond, more enhanced, more condensed, more profuse than the strictly essential. Fur coats are warm and soft, jewels gleaming, perfumes are pleasant, good wine is luscious, carved wood is exquisite, chocolates delicious and bonsai cute; none are necessary, all are excessive and each is aesthetic.

Display of excess inevitably captures attention, engages our sensibility and seizes our imagination. The utmost prototype of excess taken to sublime proportions is the Palace of the Nazirs at the Alhambra in Granada: the most excessive of all excesses. We may react with pleasure or displeasure to the excessive, but we can never remain indifferent to it. Excess is never aesthetically neutral.

The indispensability of excess

I hope to have argued convincingly enough so far that there is a salient relation between the aesthetic and the excessive. Demonstrating that this excess is indispensable, however, requires substantial argumentation. Excess has simultaneously opposing effects: both dangerous and inevitable following Bataille's thesis, as well as generous and indispensable as I contend here.

For Western cultures, both the aesthetic and the technological revolve around the same axis, pleasure, but in opposite directions: While the technological promises to reduce displeasure, the aesthetic promises to increase pleasure. If a single flower is pleasurable, a whole bouquet is even more so. For non-Western cultures, on the other hand, the aesthetic and the technological also revolve around the same axis, but in this case, are aimed in the same direction: The aesthetic does not oppose the technical but is a kind of technology for persuading the gods or maintaining a certain balance in the world.

As Veblen contraposed the instinct of workmanship to financial investment, (which is a kind of leisure conspicuously consumed and exhibited by aesthetic means), this opposition can also be reformulated in terms of a technological instinct of preserving and producing things versus an aesthetic instinct of dispensing. In other words, the technological drive is an impulse to save, reduce, restrict and be reasonable while the aesthetic is an impulse to expend, dissipate, distend.

These two opposing drives echo Nietzsche's Dionysian vs. Apollonian forces in his *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872). For Nietzsche, the Apollonian represented the reasonable, judicious, rational, reliable, useful element in human nature, while the Dionysian is the ardent, enthusiastic, passionate element, as personified by the Greek gods Apollo and Dionysus. The walls of Apollo's temple at Delphi bore two Greek maxims, »Know Thyself« the axiom of reasonableness and »Nothing in Excess«, the fundamental principle of temperance. While aesthetic theory has emphasized the Apollonian aspects admiring unity, harmony, symmetry, regularity and rhythm, the importance of the Dionysiac excessive aspect has been greatly underestimated in theory, although never in art.

Apollo is temperance and logos, while Dionysus is excess and pathos. He is in fact the Greek god of abundance related to every kind of excess: mystic in the religious, orgiastic in the sexual, ecstatic in its ritual dances, euphoric and inebriated in the Bacchanals. Dionysus was hence patron of wine and of arts like song, drama and poetry. His symbolic presence leads to a sense of freedom, fertility, generosity and ease.

While Aristotle advised temperance, what we really enjoy and need is excess: it assures us that life is magnanimous and the world abundant. Consequently, in a context that is bountiful and good, it becomes only natural to be kind and generous. Strict calculation and control of people's time, desires, energy and privacy, such as occurs in totalitarian regimes leads, Bataille insisted, to uncontrollable fear and destruction through war, dehumanization, reification and surrender of the most basic human values. What is indispensable is this possibility and actuality of the excessive itself, the feeling that excess is real, that we can lose without remorse, that there is a margin for vagary and play, that life gives more than we can take.

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Gabor Csepregi
The Clever Body and Aesthetics of Movement

In our western civilization, we entertain a rather ambiguous relationship to the human body. We tend to view it as an instrument, a machine, or a distant object of possession that responds flawlessly to external challenges. Yet, some deeply fulfilling experiences yield to an awareness of its needs and possibilities; we then perceive our living body with a sense of unity and a feeling of harmony. In recent years, considerable attention has been paid to some activities that allow us to be in touch with, and develop, the creative powers of our body. I would like add some additional observations to these contributions, focusing my attention on the aesthetic dimension of movement.

I

What gives to certain movements an aesthetic value? What are the qualities and determinants of the motor behaviour which elicits an aesthetic experience? The various authors, each being inspired by a particular philosophical, ideological, or anthropological option, advance diverse answers to these questions.

Some consider beauty as the primary characteristic of the movement endowed with an aesthetic value. A movement is beautiful when an idea, an intention, a meaning, an excellence, an inner unity and wholeness, or something »transcendent« and »inexhaustible«, becomes manifest in a sensuous and dynamic form. Our aesthetic experience consists of the perception of an irreducible excess, a superabundance, and a plenitude in a technically flawless motor performance.

Others prefer to pay attention to the formal qualities of motor behaviour. The aesthetic here is the successful realization of previously identified criteria such as order, regularity, symmetry, balance, proportion, precision, harmony, and difficulty. Although the motor form is not subordinated to external and pragmatic goals, it nevertheless remains bound to some »immanent laws« (Sobotka, 1974) and principles. Empirical observations allow us to analyze and compare these principles and to recognize their commu-

nicative significance. Our aesthetic enjoyment springs from the perception of a correspondence between subjective performance abilities and fixed, standardized movement possibilities.

The third approach considers movements from a subjective point of view. Here the aesthetic is not merely a matter of adapting movements to objective qualities but derives from the production of a dynamic form that, on the one hand, expresses ideas, conceptions, emotions, fantasies, and, on the other, elicits an awareness of total bodily involvement. To relate personal meanings to movements means to go beyond the factual, efficient, and useful, and to place the movement in a context where expression is valued over performance. The deployment of symbolic figures and illusory appearances produces an aesthetic delight and, consequently, sustains or reshapes feelings. Both the symbolic transformation and the refinement of feelings happen without adaptation to a conscious purpose; they are spontaneous processes since they spring from the primary need for the embodiment of inner life and the »symbolic envisagement of the world« (Langer, 1957).

I would like to briefly consider the characteristics of movement within the third perspective since it places great emphasis on the body's creative abilities and the affective component of the aesthetic perception. All of us have noticed that certain motor experiences induce in us an exhilarating and stimulating feeling. This is not the same state of ecstasy, euphoria, or intoxication that we might experience while dancing or taking part in certain rituals. Expressions such as enchantment, delight, rapture, captivation, excitement, and inspiration seem to be more appropriate to describe the sensations connected to the movements.

The aesthetic delight does not depend on the physiological or muscular processes alone, but rather on how we perceive ourselves in the movement and how we relate the movement to the surroundings, particularly to space. We experience a feeling of lightness and ease as we move with unusual dexterity and alertness and trust our own bodily capabilities.

The meaning of the movement is the primary source of our pleasurable feelings. To be sure, a movement must exhibit an inner order, a structure in which the different segments obtain their unity and cohesion. A fundamental prerequisite of the aesthetic satisfaction is our ability to coordinate smoothly and correctly a great number of partial movements. When an adequate mastery of certain techniques is not acquired, the various elements follow each other without accentuation, articulation, and synchronization. The movement then is devoid of internal coherence or »kinetic melody«, to use the expression of F. J. J. Buytendijk (1957) and Oliver Sacks (1995). However important it may be, the »melodic flow« alone is insuffi-

cient to produce an aesthetic value. What is needed is authenticity and expressiveness. Our aesthetic enjoyment springs from the expression of momentary feelings, insights, and desires through original and personal movement compositions. These achievements can neither be created on command nor narrowed down to stabilized and measurable movement patterns. They occur and develop, without any conscious planning and control, through the unconcerned variation of the symbolic structure, the playful improvisation of a kinetic theme, and the qualitative use of motor options.

II

I have already mentioned that some of the creative abilities of our living body uniquely contribute to an aesthetic motor experience. What are, more precisely, these abilities?

An important feature of the exploratory and symbolic formulations is the absence of interest in efficiency and technical perfection. Expressive movements are not related to specific objectives or restricted by utilitarian considerations; they lack a definite reference to a goal, a distance, or a temporal limit. They entail an unconcerned and sympathetic contact with the surroundings, a state of alert but relaxed receptiveness. Movements are initiated and carried out as responses to momentary and immediate phenomena, such as the prevailing atmosphere, the activity of other participants, the already accomplished gestures, the intensity of feelings, etc..

We have all experienced music not only suggesting movements but also compelling us to move. Our steps, jumps, turns, rotations, all the gestures, and their infinitely rich combinations, executed by the various parts of our body, are in close affinity with the specific rhythmic and melodic features of music. As Erwin Straus (1980) has noted, »the immediate experience and the (expressive) movement in which it actualizes its meaning are indivisible«.

But what makes this affinity possible? Expressive movements are dependent upon the sensibility, »pathicity«, of the body. »Pathicity« is that feature of the body by which an immediate, vivid, pre-conceptual, and affective communication with the surroundings takes place. A central element of this unmediated bond is the experience of suffering, of being affected. In the pathic sphere, something (an image, an odour, a sound) takes possession of us; we are seized by its quality and delivered to its influence. The decisive factor here is the direct, immediate intimacy of our body with the world, its ability to echo vivid and penetrating effects, to resonate to new impressions or unexpected deviations. The words »echo« and »resonance« refer to the

affective attunement to the outside world and the experience of being affected by some meaningful events.

Furthermore, we find ourselves involved in our own way in a particular situation: we are sensible to the quality of impressions according to our own point of view and interest. The pathic relationship is a transforming experience: certain objects take hold of us, affect our innermost self, often tacitly, without our explicit awareness.

The production of various motor forms also imply an attitude that may be called renunciation: a relaxed and trustful surrender to bodily impulses and intentions. As we move easily and effortlessly, we confidently rely on the sense of rhythm and distance concealed somewhere within our body. We abandon ourselves to the »natural spontaneity« of the body that, without purposeful pre-assessment or planning, introduces new movements and responds appropriately to the unexpected demands of the situation. F.J.J. Buytendijk (1965) has pointed out that we are able to invent surprising and unusual movements because our body is invested with a subtle sense of what can and should be tried and risked, with a »*finesse d'esprit*«, with an »inexhaustible creative power«.

Such an inventiveness may embody the connection, the »bisociation« (Arthur Koestler's term), of two previously unrelated sets of movement. Such a movement combination arises suddenly, it is »an upward surge« from some fertile layer of our body. The bisociative creation may consist of the unsuspected connection of a movement to a subjective significance. When, for example, we express our joy through slow and solemn gestures, without actually knowing why, the motor figures arise spontaneously from the bisociative processes of the body. Our expressive movements entail the tendency to what Paul Ricoeur (1966) calls »involuntary release«: we are surprised by the ease and appropriateness with which our body proposes unpredictable symbolic formulations.

The mimetic element is also central to the aesthetic movement experiences. The imitation of living or lifeless realities (a bird or a train) is a natural way of investing a motor form with symbolic content and articulating a particular feeling or desire. As Walter Benjamin (1978) has brought out forcefully, the source of imitative movements is our mimetic faculty, the gift of recognising and producing similarities. Thanks to this bodily endowment, we are able to re-create and interpret aspects of our immediate surroundings and express our own feelings. We find, in the mimetic object or event, an incentive to perform certain movements and charge these movements with a personal meaning. When we imitate the peculiar motion of a

bird, our interest in flying movements is fused with our intention to give a coherent and active form to some of our fears, hopes, or ideals.

This example stresses the non-realistic character of imitation. No attempt is made to copy something faithfully. Rather, imitation requires the creative ability of selecting and reproducing the constitutive traits of the chosen object.

More important, perhaps, is that the mimetic act presupposes an empathic understanding of the meaning of the perceived reality. When we display a mimetic mode of behaviour, we come to act in harmony with our surroundings. In his analysis of Benjamin's theory of mimetic experience, Jürgen Habermas (1983) speaks of the »uninterrupted connection of the human organism with the surrounding nature«. The various aspects and qualities of the environment are no longer perceived in confrontation but accepted with a sense of involvement and participation. Thus, the mimetic capacity is not only the gift of producing similarities, but also the bodily potential on which we draw in order to act in unison with the surrounding world and to perceive it with empathy and care.

Beyond their subjective significance, movements elicit an aesthetic experience due to their temporal structure, their inner order. Rhythm is the organizing factor that coordinates the temporal segments of the movement into a coherent and melodic flow. A rhythmic motor performance is not merely a passive and mechanical adaptation to a series of uniform pulses or a sequence of economical gestures. Rhythmic patterns are actively apprehended or produced by the moving subject. Of course neither is rhythm the outcome of random personal invention. However spontaneous a »rhythmizing act« may be, each motor situation and task requires a specific and suitable temporal organization. Whether spontaneously generated or actively appropriated, a rhythmic pattern normally consists of the periodic repetition, articulation, and accentuation of movement phases.

How does the rhythmic organization of the expressive movement occur? Some believe that the primary source of rhythm is the natural and vital impulses of the body. Others, placing less emphasis on bodily states and capabilities, contend that intention and consciousness preside over rhythmic emergences. We have seen, however, that expressive movements are carried out without conscious planning; they are not tied to particular goals and directions. Their temporal unfolding depends more on the immediate experiencing of spatial and motor qualities than on set structures. Thanks to their own »Knotenpunkte« (to use Arnold Gehlen's expression), movements themselves suggest a particular temporal configuration. A slight change in the manner we employ to emphasize these »fertile« phases results in the

variation of subsequent rhythmic patterns. Consequently, the various ways of grouping and accentuating movement phases derive not so much from a conscious representation but from the »logic« of the movement itself. When, for example, children alter the tempo of their stride, or switch from walking to skipping and from skipping to hopping, they seem to obey the dictates of their own body. In the words of Ursula Fritsch (1990), they allow their body to »think by means of the movement«. Their »rhythmizing acts« are based on their bodily tendency to repeat, with more or less regularity and intensity, alternating movement components, and on their ability to remain attentive to the »eloquence« of the movements. Paul Valéry (1964), reflecting on the nature of dance, has drawn our attention to this bodily potential through which the rhythmic organization of movements occur. The body, writes Valéry, »assumes a fairly simple periodicity that seems to maintain itself automatically; it seems endowed with a superior elasticity that retrieves the impulse of every movement and at once renews it. One is reminded of a top, standing on its point and reacting so sensitively to the slightest shock.«

Finally we come to the productive power of imagination. When we endow the motor form with a symbolic content, we relate our movements to visual images. Visual images, however, are not the only ingredient of expressive movements.

Valéry's analogy reminds us that, though not tied to specific performance criteria and objectives, expressive movements are nevertheless bound to particular motor situations. We may compare the movement to an ongoing »conversation« between our body and the surrounding world.

From this follows that the execution of a movement requires tactile contacts with natural elements (water, snow, grass) and objects (ball, stick). Our gliding, jumping, running, and swimming motions originate in, and lead to, this active mode of sensory communication, touching. In touching, we both experience and anticipate a specific tactile quality (smooth, rough, hard, soft). Melchior Palagyi (1907) and Arnold Gehlen (1995) have emphasized that tactile images constitute just as important a part of our movements as do the actual tactile impressions. For example, as we jump over a broad ditch or turn while skiing at high speed, our legs, as it were, »imagine«, »project« tactile sensations that should correspond to our movements.

But the tactile image of landing on the ground is the outcome of the movement that we execute in imagination. Whenever we envisage a dive into the water, our take off involves an imagined movement followed by an imagined sensation. Our body imagines movements to the same extent as it anticipates sensations, though we are seldom aware of these projections.

The motor form, whose main characteristic is the exploratory variation and continuous introduction of novelty, arises from a successful expression of feelings and a receptive relationship to the surrounding world. This relationship acquires its importance if we recognize, on the one hand, that a great variety of imagined movements and sensations are evoked by a free and relaxed encounter with objects and, on the other hand, that anticipated qualities and forms determine, just as much, the characteristics of a movement as do actual sensory experiences. Movements, in short, are not only upshots of specific intentions, but also responses arising from the formative powers and expressive energies of the body.

III

I have tried to draw attention, though rather briefly, to some of our somatic capabilities that produce expressive and »autotelic« movement compositions. The significance of these movement experiences have already been emphasized by important studies in recent years. To these learned analyses, I would like to add here one remark.

Several contemporary thinkers forcefully argue that our relationship to the surrounding world has been radically transformed: we no longer have significant experiences and relate to concrete and tangible realities with a growing sense of alienation. Albert Borgmann (1984) has shown that the widespread tendency to specialization, and the increasing use of technological devices, has progressively eliminated the need and possibility of active and sensitive engagement with our total environment. The »extended network of hyperintelligence« and the »paradigm of technological device« has lead to a degeneration of our bodily capabilities. Disembodiment, as Borgmann asserts, is the gradual atrophy of bodily powers and skills, intensified by a disconnected and disburdened sort of life.

No recovery of our fully functioning body can occur without some initiatives. Aesthetic movement experiences, as I contend, help us to achieve a more intimate contact with the surrounding world and foster some of our bodily abilities. These results cannot be produced at will. What is needed, primarily, is adequate opportunities, for both adults and youth, to experiment with movements and take initiatives freely, without fear and constraint. The creation of this free space for innovation and enjoyment is what an aesthetic education has to seek and promote.

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Jale N. Erzen
The Plight of Aesthetics and Art Criticism
The Universal Model or Pluralism – What are the Criteria?

This paper will try to approach the controversy over universalism (monism) and pluralism, which have concerned values in art and architecture in the aesthetic discourse of our century. It will take issue with questions that are posed with adherence to one or the other value. Although the discourse which has been concerned with this duality has been articulated in the western world and has been represented in the two great cultural narratives of the 20th century, namely Modernism and Post-Modernism it has basically dealt with the evaluation and comparison of western and non-western aesthetic approaches. And as such, it has also functioned as self-criticism within western culture.

As many adamantly held aesthetic views, the two above mentioned contrasting paradigms have had strong political and ethical implications. As the capitalist system has shown the tendency to expand infinitely, dominating all production and consumption in the world, the West has been blamed as a post-colonial power which, through its modernist philosophy which was backed up by industrialisation, claimed universal value for its own aesthetic formalism.

The basic difference between western and non-western aesthetic approaches could be claimed to be that dominant aesthetics approaches in the western world have tried to understand sensory perception intellectually. Western art, in its most prized articulations has given preference to basic forms that are thought to underlie certain systems in nature. Non-western cultures have often shown preferences for orders and forms that are difficult to gather within basic categories, orthogonal systems or pure geometry. The dominant approaches within western aesthetics have tried to find common formal denominators to explain relationships and to unite the sensory and the ideational.¹

The above are generalizations, and one can find exceptions in non-western cultures where classical forms, very similar with western preferences have also been employed. Such approaches often emerge in well-established

¹ Although the Cartesian system which defined mind and matter as separate categories, is criticized for divisionism, the general western attitude since antiquity, on which Descartes also based his thinking, created such a categorical duality as a detachment to take control, as some kind of Archimedean effort.

powerful social and political systems, which may imply political connections to the production and use of forms. On the other hand, there have also been configurations within western cultures, involved with specific, complex and not easily categorizeable orders; more often than not these have evolved in marginal cultural situations. Of course these cultural attitudes have been transformed in time with political and economic conditions and influences.

Hence, the difference between the western and the non-western aesthetic approaches lies not only in their perceptual attitude, but also in what one may call basically an oral or non-written cultural tradition and one that is written and theoretical. The non-western attitude and values which reinforce memory and the mnemonic rather than the written register, have basically retained the characteristics of medieval cultures. The written register, on the other hand, becomes a prosaic codification and requires labeling and classification. Although it is with industrialization, which opened the way to enlightenment, that writing penetrated all realms of life and production and affected the social make-up as well as aesthetic/perceptual approaches, the west, since antiquity had tried hard to overcome the ambiguities of oral/poetic culture, preferring to invest in the certainty of definitions and concepts possible only through writing. Today, in the post-industrial age, with new recording technologies, writing ceases to have priority over other representations. The world of interpretation that has been expanded creates a new culture which is not dependent on global and universal codifications and which, somewhat like in oral medieval cultures resume a variety of values and specificity.

Western culture's becoming a model for the world was due to the great advances achieved by industry and technology in supplying the material needs of large populations. In the international artistic arena, intellectuals and creative people from all nations and cultures also contributed to the common causes of modernism and of contemporary culture. Yet, till the 1950's, political and economic exigencies and the fact that industrial development took a long time to spread to many parts of the world, made the west a readily accepted guide in civilization. After the second half of the century which has been roughly called the era of post-modernism, the promises of modernism, industrial development and of world peace having failed, many cultures began to look for their own political and economic solutions outside the guidance of the west. As capitalist and communist powers began to lose their satellite nations, the political fragmentation created a corresponding search for cultural identity and independence.

Western Aesthetics – Claims to the Universal

Besides the above formal differences that can be summarized about western and non-western cultures, one major difference which greatly concerns and affects aesthetic attitudes is the practice, since antiquity, of theoretical and critical writing in the west and its being almost non-existent outside western culture. Theoretical and critical writing appeared in Greece after phonetic alphabet began to be used about 700 BC, and after the teachings of Socrates which influenced the evolution of a conceptual mode of thinking. Even when literature over art and architecture was practiced outside the west, as in China and Japan or in Ottoman culture in the 16th and 17th centuries, this was always descriptive, narrative or canonical.

The development of logical and conceptual thinking, which paralleled the development of syntactic orders in literary forms and in hierarchic orders in the visual realm, has marked the most classical and sophisticated art forms of western culture, from the renaissance to the early 20th century. But, this intellectual and conceptual quality has also been considered as a negative aspect of western culture, with the argument that such an analytical approach to the sensory was the outcome of a separation between body and mind, and was the effort to manipulate and dominate the »other«.

The claim to the universal could be made through the creation of a common reference, a code, a sign, which could stand for experience and cognition. With such a reference, experience remained as a closed individual realm which could be referred to only through art and poetry and could be interpreted only subjectively.

Conceptual definitions and analyses of sensory mechanisms and of aesthetic perception that were developed in the west, were often evaluated negatively by critics of the west as creating reductionism, limitations and categorization. On the other hand, only when a situation can be analyzed with its different aspects and when these can be understood separately and be defined, that they can be mentally conceived. Western culture may have analytically separated aspects of perceived reality into concepts and categories; but through such analyses it arrived at understanding correspondences and correlation between physical and non-physical aspects of reality and of experience, and has tried to find the unity between the mental and the physical. This created the possibility of applying theory in practice. Theory and criticism in the written tradition have been agents to promote this relationship between mind and matter by objectifying the tools for such a relationship, namely representation, language, symbols, codes. The particularity of non-western cultures seen from this perspective is that they have not

developed the conceptual and mental representations of sensory inputs, perceptual stimuli, in short, concepts and theories of perception and of the experience of reality.

Even if these marked differences between western and non-western cultures are being lost in the world of today, they have for very long been influential in the way aesthetic attitudes have evolved.

Besides, the development of industrial production in the west has especially accentuated cultural differences, emphasizing analytical and rational thinking. The development of industrial production has also been instrumental in the evolution of new political systems and values and has greatly influenced the functioning of religion. One of the most important effects of industrial production has been the development of machine aesthetics, which also employed hierarchy, basic geometry and rational relationships. With these added cultural differences in process, attitudes in aesthetics and art, and the function of these in western societies have been greatly articulated to become of primary importance within society.

Besides the influences of critical and theoretical writing, and of industrial production, another major fact that has formed aesthetic preferences and attitudes in the west, has been the relation to the body. This has its origins in Christian thought and has been reflected in the visual representation of the human figure. The concept of incarnation, meaning that existence is possible only physically, and that the soul can only exist in a body, has made representation a most important tool in understanding and talking about the physical and the non-physical aspects of reality.

Thus western aesthetics which, at the beginning of the century, claiming to be the product of progress, presented its formal values as having universal validity, has certain basic aspects which can be summarized as,

1. The significance of representation which is rooted in the idea of incarnation, and which gives power of manipulation and articulation to the subject, over the object.

2. The development of analytical, critical and theoretical discourse and literature.

3. The aesthetic of basic forms, geometries, hierarchic orders and rational relationships which are reinforced by the culture of industry and which are reflected in the machine-aesthetic.

4. A linear conception and approach to space and time which presupposes progress and a futuristic ideal, creating a space-time model that is open to manipulation by its ad infinitum controllable and measurable quality, as in perspective.

Modernism, which was the promoter for the diffusion of the above aspects of western aesthetics, claimed universality for its formal preferences that were developed in western art forms as classical orders. Art having liberated itself from any religious function by the 20th century could now claim a spiritual power because of its universal aesthetic values and also claim to have a reformatory function for society.

This latter idea and claim were also related to the belief that aesthetic preferences and choices were never a matter of practical choice and as such were free from necessity. This gave aesthetics a more elevated position than ethics with the explanation that ethical choices were in fact grounded in the aesthetic because there were no real functional or practical grounds for them. Thus, aesthetics became a realm of high spiritual value and was separated from the reality and exigency of everyday life. A further development of this view today is that aesthetics, art appreciation, and criticism, in their most advanced states, are independent of biological conditionings, and independent of nature and are developed conceptually.

The above mentioned values can basically represent the views of western aesthetics although, naturally there are other different and exceptional attitudes within western culture. On the other hand, if the above have been seen as pertaining to universally understandable forms, the exceptional and different that have remained outside these values, and aesthetic attitudes, have not been analyzed, evaluated and articulated individually.

Pluralism – Specificity and Search for Identity

Starting with Claude Lévi-Strauss and structuralism, the possibility of investigation of expressions into categories such as signifier and signified (form and content) made it possible to analyze the values and expressions of other cultures and to apprehend them, casting doubt on the universality of any value system. The result was a serious skepticism about western rationalism and the rational account of history with which the west had put itself forward. During the 19th century as well as in the first half of the 20th, European artists and culture enthusiasts had revealed the riches of other cultures, primitive or sophisticated. These served as inspiration to the renewal of western art. Yet, it is after 1950s that non-European cultures' artistic expressions began to be valued for their own merits. Post-modernism brought forth »difference« as a value in itself. There have been also new awareness born of radical new facts such as the atom bomb, environmental

destruction, outer space expeditions, the contraceptive pill, etc., giving rise to new attitudes and articulations within culture and arts.

In the second half of the 20th century, political fragmentation has also given rise to aesthetic fragmentation and to the emergence of new views and voices on the artistic arena. Individuals, marginal groups, social fractions which had been hitherto quiet have since, in the search for identity and self-image, been claiming their own individual aesthetic attitudes.

Amongst some newly emerging forms we can count hybrid expressions which integrate folkloric themes or motifs with newly absorbed forms of urban culture. These often make up the aesthetic of the migrant groups. These people may be moving from one country to another, from the land to the city, or they may be moving from one social class to another, in situations where social mobility is great or where unsettled economic conditions bring unexpected gains overnight. Each culture or country may have their special examples. What is common is that such sudden changes in orientation have created the possibility of new aesthetic forms and attitudes that are reflected in the arts and in living environments. These, along with the expression of newly emerging voices of marginal groups are influencing the developments in the arts and even give impetus to new art forms such as social or environmental art.²

The picture of aesthetic views held globally in our times would be complete if we add to the monism of western aesthetics and the pluralism of non-western, marginal attitudes, the increasingly expanding fact of mass aesthetics, or forms of mass culture. This, however, is becoming a complex phenomenon, much more controversial than the analyses Ortega y Gasset has given us in his book, *The Revolt of the Masses*, or than the critical writing of Umberto Eco in his essay, »The Structure of Popular Taste«. What has started as a design for mass production, based on the basic formal preferences of western aesthetics in the beginning of the century, has developed into a production of low priced consumption goods for popular taste, with the intervention of the capitalist market. Design, which at the beginning of the century had reformist claims for society has become a commodity for the elite. While the promotion of popular taste increasingly wipes out any cultural difference, the growing power and diffusion of telecommunications used by media is employing and largely exploiting any cultural, individual and indigenous traits and qualities that may exist, as novelties for the mar-

² In these areas, as it has always been true in the marginal, the innovative and the avant-garde, one cannot talk about a typical, rigid, western or non-western approach or aesthetics. These efforts are always transgressive of cultural and aesthetic categories.

ket. Today, in the field of culture very little is left as quality of identity, subjectivity and of the self.³

Setting the Criteria

Within such rapidly changing contexts, the evaluation of these new expressions and art forms by critical aesthetic analyses would first need the formulation of new aesthetic criteria or alternative concepts of evaluation. Aesthetic evaluation and art criticism have never had absolute and fixed rules and any prescriptions about aesthetic value would take away the limitless vitality or the dynamic potential of the artwork. However, if art criticism and aesthetics are going to function as guides into the world of art and culture, such guidance needs certain assessments, claims and certain hypotheses to proceed. This is so especially in a context where multiple values vie with each other.

According to Isaiah Berlin, plurality of values can have meaning only if they are of a limited number: »I do believe that there is a plurality of values which men can and do seek, and that these values differ. There is not an infinity of them. The number of human values, of values which I can pursue while maintaining my human semblance, my human character, is finite... And the difference this makes is that if a man pursues one of these values, I, who do not, am able to understand why he pursues it or what it would be like, in his circumstances, for me to be induced to pursue it. Hence the possibility of human understanding.«⁴

The case could not be different for aesthetics and art, if we are appealing basically to perception, to sensory mechanisms which have to do with form. Given the existential, productive, economic and political conditions existing world wide at any time, we have to appeal to an idea of what man is, what his limits are, and what also is common amongst his many alternative states. Therefore, according to Berlin's argument, pluralism, which can be a context where different views exist side by side, would make sense if common understanding were possible.

Yet, this poses a problem. Can there be a common understanding and reasoning for all cultures? Have we not seen that even certain basic understandings have changed in time? Does not the belief in such common un-

³ One has to also see how the capitalist market is out to assimilate any new production into its own agenda.

⁴ Isaiah Berlin, 'My Intellectual Path', *The first and the Last*, *The New York Review*, Vol. XLV, No. 8, p. 56.

derstanding stem from the ideals of the enlightenment, for even if it entails the possibility of common goals for humanity, the fact is that for many cultures outside the west this cannot be held for the moment. In fact, within the multiple values held today, there are many which are not based on rationality or reason and stem from religious doctrines or mysticism. These claim the validity of truths or realities that cannot be explained by reason. Some even seek their legitimacy in attacking homocentric values.

The emergence of counter-enlightenment views and values makes the claim of common understanding for legitimizing pluralism, quite untenable. Thus, Isaiah Berlin's implied criteria of the human model and of human understanding fails to hold ground if some kind of contingency within human existence and understanding is accepted to be possible at any time.

From the point of view of aesthetics this contingency is most important because it is the basis for transgressions and innovation in art. The monistic/universal claim depends on a fixed model of humanity; with such a model art cannot look to the future for new experience, once it has given expression with all possible techniques available it would cease to be creative and would repeat itself.

The discourse about the end of art, which became widespread two decades ago, assumed such a viewpoint. Arthur Danto's article, »The End of Art« argued that all possible visual expressions had been rendered and art had nowhere to go; it was now the time for philosophy: art criticism. Joseph Margolis' response in the 'Endless Future of Art' was that the technical (technological) model of art which sees no future when art fulfills the technical possibilities reflected a reductionism of humanity. Margolis argued that art's development is just as related to the needs, demands and meanings of human expression at its disposal as it is to technical means. He stated that these needs and meanings will never cease to create new articulations within the infinite dynamics of human existence.

Thus, the idea of legitimizing pluralism with the hypothesis that humanity can only have limited number of values and that these can be understandable because they are limited in number proves to be wrong within the contingent human condition. It fails to solve the essential problem of correspondence and communication amongst value systems. Pluralism then ends in infinite fragmentation of the human world in the search for individual identity. Such a fragmentation and the impossibility of communication are seen today in the realm of politics as nationalism emerges as a search for identity.

Conclusion

The discipline of aesthetics within philosophy emerged with a function of evaluation and determining of taste and form quality. It could be valid as a discipline, within the enlightenment, because it could base its analyses and estimations on criteria that were developed from natural facts and from empirical findings, through reason and logic. In short, it was legitimized through a scientific model.

Comparative aesthetics, as most comparative cultural studies that began in the sixties, may have benefited from structuralist methods of analyses for finding common grounds to compare disparate artistic or cultural examples. Yet, today we see that structuralist methods have not achieved impartiality or independence from European habits of thinking and evaluating. They remain dependent on conceptual categories. Deconstructivism tells us that the only way cultural and artistic expressions can be decoded is by thinking in units, parts, elements.

This claim of deconstructivism seems to explain certain facts that new technologies are imposing into our everyday and aesthetic realities. Fragmentation becomes the paradoxical way of grasping the »other« or the »self«, which is possible only in bits and pieces. The new technology of the »digit« pervades all production and habits of perceiving and thinking. This may be a kind of echo of the »monad« of Leibniz.

The claim of classicism or modernism, or of the enlightenment, of grasping the whole as a hierarchic structure of parts, which had meaning only in relation to the »center«, is no longer acceptable. In a world of pluralistic values, the common ground is the infinite whole that is constituted only in the co-existence of variety. Understanding cannot be global or absolute, it can only be fragmentary. Conceptual models cannot render the truth about the total; they can only remain as conceptual tools. Within the context of pluralism the only direct experience of reality is through intuition. Thus, common understanding in a pluralistic context can be argued for only with a hermeneutic explanation, which is not a systematic method of explaining understanding.

What kinds of implications can the above discussion have for aesthetics and art criticism?

In answering this question we can state the various positions taken vis-à-vis aesthetic values:

1. Aesthetic judgement is of universal validity.

This takes us back to Kant's argument about subjective judgement and thus, establishes a ground for the co-existence of universality and of pluralism.

2. Individual and cultural aesthetic values cannot be argued, objectively explained, or empirically tested. This implies the impossibility of common criteria or any criteria that are objectively established.

3. Aesthetic values can evolve both independently of material conditionings and can also be influenced and conditioned by them. We see that aesthetic preferences may have deep origins beyond actual conditionings, or may be molded by actual conditions and by education. This implies that identity definition through aesthetic choices can be open to manipulation and political control.

If aesthetic values are at the same time subjective, culturally and environmentally conditioned, adopted, taught, dynamic, changeable, and contingent, today where differences live side by side, no common criteria for these can be established. The plight of art criticism and aesthetics is that they cannot proceed only in relation to form or to content, but have to understand how these correspond to each other in different cases, and how their relationship may change with new technologies and media. Pluralism cannot be seen on a comparative basis, because comparison needs a common source of evaluation or criteria. Pluralism has to be taken as the natural reflection of human expression, just as pluralism is natural to nature. Each value has to be presented and explained as one specific facet of an infinity of languages and human expressions.

This paper has tried to present the basic views and characteristics of western aesthetics and of non western approaches to aesthetics, and has argued the impossibility of developing any common criteria to understand all the diversity of today's art production and cultural processes. As a conclusion it proposes that aesthetics and art criticism at their very best and insightful, become domains of interaction and poetic dialogues rather than guides to render art and cultural processes transparent and to create value control over them.

Giovanna Lelli

A Typology of Medieval Islamic Poetics

Elements of a Comparative Analysis between Islam and the West

Contemporary globalisation contains a primary contradiction between a tendency towards world economic unity on the one hand, and a tendency towards world political, social and cultural fragmentation on the other. The recent flourishing of comparative studies seems to be a reaction to this contradiction. There are two main kinds of comparison: comparison between different things, and comparison between similar things. Several contemporary scholars give preference to comparison between heterogeneous cultural traditions (e.g. between the West and the Far East) rather than comparison between analogous cultural traditions (e.g. between the West and the Near East). Emphasising cultural differences, as a reaction to globalisation, is indeed one of the main traits of contemporary philosophy. Our comparative analysis between Islamic and western medieval poetics is based more on their cultural similarities than on their cultural differences. We would like to substitute post-modern fragmentation with the shaping of new, open and critical forms of universalism. Moreover, as the subject of this congress is »aesthetics as philosophy«, we are going to use a theoretical approach to poetics in preference to an empirical-literary one.

First of all, to touch on the methodology, we shall expose the historical basis of our comparative analysis. Constant references in the mass media to the danger of Islamic fundamentalism make people think that there is a deep opposition between Islam and the West. So, why do we maintain that in the Middle Ages Islam and the West had a common cultural background? In spite of their religious differences, during the Middle Ages the Islamic East and the Latin West, as »the twin sons of Hellenism«, belonged to a unitary cultural system. The unity of the civilisations that flourished around the Mediterranean Sea was broken at the end of the XVth century. After the discovery of America, the axis of international trade moved from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic, leading to the decline of the mercantile Islamic civilisation and to the flourishing of modern Europe. It is precisely on the basis of their common Hellenistic background that we have developed a comparative analysis between Islamic and western medieval poetics. Of course, as far as the Middle Ages are concerned, one should not understand the word »Islam« in its narrow, religious (that is to say »modern«)

sense. In its Medieval and broad sense, the word »Islam« refers to all the aspects of the cosmopolitan civilisation that flourished from the Atlantic Ocean (Spain and Morocco) to the river Hindus (today's Pakistan).

We suggest developing a comparative analysis between Islamic and western medieval poetics on the basis of a typology of the Islamic medieval poetics itself. But medieval Islam, just as the Medieval West, had a structured and universal understanding of knowledge. For this reason, it would be inappropriate to analyse Islamic medieval poetical thought independently of the general Islamic medieval order of knowledge. A typology of Islamic medieval poetics should then be related to a very general typology of Islamic medieval culture. In our opinion, it is possible to distinguish, within the medieval Islamic culture, between three main religious and cultural paradigms:

1) *the dominant paradigm* of religious orthodoxy which provided a largely literal and anthropomorphist interpretation of the Scriptures. The religious orthodoxy preferred a legal approach to religion to a metaphysical one;

2) *the neoplatonic paradigm*, which spread mostly in the eastern parts of the Islamic world and can be exemplified by the thought of the Iranian philosopher Avicenna (X-XIth century);

3) *the protomodern paradigm*, which opened the way to an historical and a scientific approach to knowledge and can be exemplified by the thought of the Arab philosopher Averroes of Cordoba (XIIth century).¹

On the basis of this very general typology of Islamic medieval culture, we propose a typology of Islamic medieval poetics, which nevertheless should not be considered related to the former either in a mechanic or in a direct sense. Such a typology would consist of: 1) the dominant poetics, 2) the neoplatonic poetics, and 3) the protomodern poetics. But let us see in more detail what is the meaning we attribute to these categories, both from an Islamic and a comparative perspective.

1) *the dominant Islamic poetics* is characterised by a mainly grammatical and rhetorical approach to poetic questions. Texts as treatises of rhetoric concerning style figures, or *belles-lettres* and letter-writing handbooks played a very important role in the education of the Islamic intelligentsia. Another important trait of the dominant poetics in the Islamic world is that, since the

¹ As far as cosmology is concerned, such a typology of Islamic medieval culture has been proposed by the prominent orientalist Alessandro Bausani, who distinguished, within Islamic culture, between a *legal* attitude, a *gnostic* attitude and a *scientific* attitude. Cf. Bausani, Alessandro, *L'Enciclopedia dei Fratelli della purità. Riassunto, con Introduzione e breve commento, dei 52 Trattati o Epistole degli Ikhwân as-safâ*, Napoli, Istituto Universitario orientale, 1978, pp. 21 ff.

very beginning of its development, it was closely related to the holy exegesis (theologians wondered whether they should give a literal or an allegorical interpretation to the Scriptures).

From a comparative point of view, we may point out evident correspondences between Islamic and western poetics in the Middle Ages. The medieval West also had a mainly grammatical and rhetorical approach to poetic questions, which were also closely related to the holy exegesis;

2) *the neoplatonic Islamic poetics*. Apart from those concrete literary works that can be considered perfect specimens of neoplatonic poetics (for example, a large part of Persian poetry), the oriental trend of Hellenistic Islamic philosophy (the »oriental *falsafa*«) was characterised by a neoplatonic interpretation of Aristotle. This approach was rooted in the Hellenistic sources (e.g. Alexander of Aphrodisias) of the Islamic philosophers. The oriental Islamic philosophers (such as al-Farabi and Avicenna), apart from their original writings, commented on most of the Aristotelian corpus, including the *Poetics* and the *Rhetoric*. The most apparent characteristic of these commentaries is that, according to them (as a result of the influence of the Hellenistic commentators on Aristotle), the *Poetics* and the *Rhetoric* were considered a part of Aristotle's Logic. The neoplatonic interpretation of Aristotle on the one hand, and the logical approach to the *Poetics* and the *Rhetoric* on the other, largely influenced both the poetics and the aesthetics of medieval Islam. But we are unable to go into further detail.

From a comparative point of view, we should point out that the medieval West also gave, in its turn, a neoplatonic interpretation on Aristotle, which was likewise influenced by Hellenistic sources. Nevertheless, in the West, neoplatonism had larger influence in the general field of aesthetics than in the specific field of poetics.²

From the XIIIth century onwards, as a result of the translation movement from Arabic into Latin, the logical approach to poetics also spread in the West. But what we would like to stress here, without going into detail, is that it was not because of the translation movement that Islam and the West came closer to one another, rather it was because they were already close (on the basis of their common Hellenistic background) that the translation movement could be achieved;

3) *protomodern Islamic poetics*. We understand the word »protomodern« in the sense of a tendency towards an historical approach to literature. Nevertheless, modernism is a typically western phenomenon (related to Humanism and the Renaissance), while the Islamic world, in spite of various important cultural movements, until now has not produced an analogous histori-

² Cf. Eco, Umberto, *Arte e bellezza nell'estetica medievale*, Sonzogno, Bompiani, 1987.

cal process leading to a truly historical interpretation of its classical tradition. For these historical reasons, it might be interesting to find, within medieval Islamic poetics, the protomodern elements which could culminate in a modern approach to literature. In our opinion, it is possible to find such elements in various genres of texts, such as philosophical texts (e.g. the Averroes' commentaries on Aristotle's *Poetics* and *Rhetoric*), books concerning the education of the perfect *homme de lettres* (similar to Baldassarre Castiglione's *Uomo ideale*), and others.

The typology of medieval Islamic poetics that we have just proposed should not be understood as a catalogue for texts, nor as a triad of absolute hypostasis. On the contrary, the three categories we listed above are paradigms, and they do not exist in a pure state. There are texts in which the dominant poetic paradigm prevails, while there are other texts in which the neoplatonic or the protomodern paradigms are predominant.

Conclusion

The aim of our comparative, typological analysis of Islamic and western poetics of the Middle Ages is to encourage medievalist scholars both from the Islamic and the western disciplines to cooperate with the ultimate goal of a wider interpretation of the Middle Ages. The contemporary crisis of modernism makes us think about the roots of modernism itself. The traditional historical view which draws a straight line from classical Greece to Romanticism (through the Renaissance and the Enlightenment), could give way to a wider, non-eurocentric view of historical development. Ernst Robert Curtius, in his masterpiece *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter* (1948) has already criticised the classicist approach to the meaning of western culture.³

As Curtius pointed out, Late Antiquity represents a crucial moment in the shaping of the unity of western culture, which was mostly based on its literary and rhetorical tradition. We believe that Curtius' interpretation of western cultural identity might be enhanced by a discussion about a global notion of the Middle Ages, including both Islam and the West as two inseparable parts of a whole. Medieval comparative poetics is no more than an element of an analysis that should involve all the aspects of the civilisations rooted in Hellenism that flourished around the Mediterranean Sea.

³ Curtius, Ernst Robert, *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter*, Bern, A. Francke Verlag, 1948.

Grazia Marchianò
*The Enlarging of the Aesthetic Ecumene
through Transcultural Studies*

The long, detailed title given to the ninth session of this conference seems to reflect a need and possibly a concern whose presence has been felt in varying degrees at the official conferences of the international aesthetic community preceding it. And since this IAA Conference in Ljubljana happens to be the last to take place in the twentieth century, it may be useful to ponder a little on a problem implicit in the title, and look it squarely in the face. »Art, Culture and Aesthetics in the East, the West, the First, the Second and the Third World« conveys a message both reassuring and worrying. Reassuring, because in theory it would not seem to exclude any of the contributions to aesthetics as *philosophy* in any part of the world – at the very worst, sporadic lines of aesthetic research in the Arctic or in societies impervious to media coverage might resent not being an explicit part of an assembly described in such precise terms. However, the message is also in my view somewhat worrying, for in order to include contributions to aesthetics outside the Euro-Anglo-American perimeter, whose hegemony has always been taken for granted, geopolitical criteria have been adopted. And this is worrying because there is a risk that these very criteria may widen rather than bridge the gulf between the so-called first, second and third worlds, and furthermore that this is only the beginning of a list likely to become much longer.

Not that I wish, with this preamble, to give the impression that I am getting over-concerned about what is after all just a title, nor that I have launched into lexical hair-splitting in order to hawk an expression, like the one in the title of this paper, that I consider preferable. Nevertheless, »Ecumene«, with all the semantic limits inherent in the word,¹ seems to me

¹ The Greek word »*oikumene*« was of common use in the classical authors. From Homer onward, *oikèō* is used both in the intransitive sense of »I dwell«, »I inhabit«, referring to single individuals, groups and entire communities, and in the transitive sense of inhabiting a place, a territory, a city. *Oikia* is the habitation, the house, things domestic, even lineage, stock. In Attic law *oikos* is patrimony. *Oikizo* refers transitively to the enterprise of populating a country, establishing a colony, cultivating a region. Herodotus, however, dealt a pretty effective blow to the contextual use of the word. *Ecumene* is not a land inhabited in general, but a land inhabited by Greeks, compared

to be a more appropriate term for designating a context which, at least in principle, cannot be measured on the same scale used to weigh stock-exchange prices, Third World demographic figures, or human existence in terms of money.

Consider for example Bertolt Brecht's remark: »What is man? I don't know what a man is, but I know his price.«

It is clear that the word »price« deliberately circumscribes the idea of human being. Certainly it is not inappropriate to speak about human being – in the first, the second and the third worlds – in terms of price, the price of a life being one of the faces of the »human condition« prism, but unless one wishes to impose or contest the idea that a human being is merely the price that one pays to suppress or save him or her, it is tendentious and, to my mind, contrary to a truly philosophical approach to direct our enquiry exclusively in that direction.

But what does »a truly philosophical approach« mean? According to Erjavec, the nature of philosophical activity is basically critical. I quote from his recent contribution to the Arezzo Aesthetic Conference (June 1998): »... no matter from which cultural tradition we commence our attempts to determine what philosophy is, we are confronted with the fact that philosophy proper doesn't exist if it doesn't possess this self-reflective strain, i.e. of being not only a thought about extant reality, but also a critical thought about thinking as such.«²

In we now wish to consider what other features determine the structure of philosophical thought, three concomitant factors seem to go together

with whom all other peoples are barbarians: literally »stammerers«, in the sense that they speak Greek badly.

The Greeks were by no means the only people of the ancient world to convert a linguistic handicap into downright inferiority. There is no human group that is not »programmed« to conceive otherness in terms that rarely admit equal dignity. How could philosophy, which according to Heidegger has its foundations in the Greek mind, be an exception to this rule?

This is, however, a prejudice which needs to be exposed and torn out root and branch. It has gone on too long and has restricted our studies in many senses. My major issue in this paper is to claim a truly ecumenical approach to aesthetic matters philosophically, anthropologically and historically considered. See also the present author's: »Let a Hundred Flowers Bloom, Birds and Crabgrass notwithstanding«, *Proceedings of the Pacific Rim Conference in Transcultural Aesthetics*, E. Benitez ed., University of Sydney, June 1997 (an electronic publication ISBN 0-646-28504-1). And Introduction to *East and West in Aesthetics*, G. Marchianò ed., Pisa-Rome, Istituti Editoriali Internazionali 1997.

² A. Erjavec, »Aesthetics and Philosophies«, *Proceedings of the Arezzo Conference on Reconfiguring Aesthetics?*, Turin, Trauben, 1998 (text in Italian).

with it, namely a conceptual lexicon, a dialectical structure and a textual body of reference.

In whichever cultural milieu we meet with these concomitant factors, we may say that a philosophical activity takes place on a technically common basis. And it is here that »ecumene«³ may give a sound idea of the contexts – philosophical, religious, literary, artistic – in which aesthetic knowledge has been able to grow and expand in the last thousand years or so. If then we wished to visualise it as an imaginary »tree of knowledge« inscribed in a compass card, we would see that the vastest land-mass between the Atlantic and the Pacific, the Eurasian continent, is also that in which the tree of aesthetic knowledge has put forth its branches in the principal linguistic *koinè* of the ancient Eurasian world: Sanskrit, Greek, Persian, Chinese, Japanese. Those languages acted indeed as formidable propellers of learning, religious faith, artistic sensibility and aesthetic awareness both in their original areas and in those in which they came to be influential. This basic recognition, which is borne out by historical evidence, allows us to consider the branches and sub-branches of the tree of aesthetic knowledge as part of a common Eurasian heritage to be investigated in ways which, consequently, cannot but be cross-culturally and comparatively oriented.

Put in these terms, our approach to aesthetics as a philosophical field becomes wider, and prismatic, not only because of its multi-faceted background but also because it will also have to take into due account the multiple ways in which a set of major recurrent issues pertaining to the aesthetic sphere have been dealt with on a technically common basis from one corner of Eurasia to the other.

At this point someone might object: »All right, aesthetic thought in Eurasia is no doubt an irreplaceable legacy, but here we are at the threshold of the 21st century of the common era, and a lot of water has passed under the bridges of aesthetics. And unless one wants to be exclusively concerned with an archaeology of aesthetic knowledge, it is surely more important to join forces to re-shape aesthetics in ways – like those proposed by Wolfgang Iser⁴ – that are in key with the new times.« To this pertinent objection I would answer: To claim a truly cross-cultural approach to philosophical aesthetics is part of a research strategy perfectly in line with a time, like the present one, of radical transformations in all avenues of knowledge and in all directions of life at a personal and collective level. The varieties

³ See Ref. 1.

⁴ Particularly in *Die Aktualität des Ästhetischen*, ed. W. Iser, Munich, Fink, 1993; *Undoing Aesthetics*, London, Sage, 1997; *Aesthetics Beyond Aesthetics*, Proceedings of the Arezzo Conference on *Reconfiguring Aesthetics?*, Turin, Trauben, 1998 (text in Italian).

of investigations made in European and Asian thought in the sphere of aesthetic experience and aesthetic cognition offer some formidable keys to plumbing that region where – in Keiji Nishitani's words – »resides the marrow of the mind of men.«⁵ There are in my opinion few spheres of human experience as close to that elusive region as the aesthetic sphere, and it is the task of aesthetics in its theoretical capacity to explore that region with the support of the investigations conducted in several other non-philosophic fields. In fact, no discipline today, least of all philosophy, can afford to be self-sufficient to such an extent as to discard, in principle and practice, the benefits of interdisciplinarity.

Two examples may concretely illustrate my point. Suppose we want to ascertain whether beauty is universally acknowledged as an aesthetic value, or whether it is not, rather, a »local« cultural trait, depending on the extent to which an aesthetic sensibility is present in a given human community where speculations in abstract, conceptual and dialectical terms are fashioned in a consistent body of knowledge, as has happened in Eurasia.

In order to obtain evidence relating to the latter question, philosophical aesthetics will have to rely on cultural anthropology and on the results of its field-research in native communities. It would then be somewhat pointless for the aesthetician to predicate beauty as if it were a »universal«, like Plato's *to kalòn*, given that ethnological research provides enough evidence that no traces of a notion and of an appreciation of beauty are found among so-called primitive societies.

A report given by Garry W. Trompf on his field research in Papua New Guinea is in this respect illuminating, and I shall briefly summarise it. In the company of Kai, a young educated Papuan native from the Wahgi ethnic group, Garry arrives at the edge of a ridge overlooking the Wahgi River, near Kup, in highland New Guinea.⁶ The magnificence of the place is such as to make him exclaim: »What an extraordinarily beautiful valley!« To which Kai replies: »Ah, Garry, yes, but we don't really talk about it that way, or in the way whites usually do.« For the Wahgi people, Trompf tells us, »the valley was not, at least traditionally speaking, scenically beautiful, not even conceived as a »joy to the senses«. It was *ka*– via the most commonly used adjective in the Wahgi language and usually translated as »good« — or in other words it »pleased« insofar as it brought the benefits, or »riches« that the local people needed from it. But apparently (or at least *prima facie*) it was not an

⁵ Nishitani K., *Religion and Nothingness*, Jan Van Bragt ed., Berkeley, University of California Press, 1982.

⁶ G.W. Trompf, »Croce and Collingwood on »Primitive« and »Classical« Aesthetics», *Literature and Aesthetics*, University of Sydney, October 1997.

object of aesthetic appreciation, and certainly, Kai insisted, no one would ever have thought of painting it, or evoking the whole scene in art.« »My prior experience of his culture,« Trompf continues, »soon made me realise an experiential chasm yawned between myself and his people, with Kai, a clever undergraduate at the University of Papua New Guinea, mediating between the two. The Wahgi, I accepted, clearly possessed art« (a long list of items is mentioned by the author) — yet »Ka, we might presume, can never be used to articulate a strictly »aesthetic« judgement, for any possibility of art's genuine independence is precluded while a »total traditional life-way«, the »religion of the solidarity group« is triumphant». ⁷

These last two phrases, which are quoted from O'Hanlon, ⁸ and the direction taken by Trompf's further analysis offer an opportunity to approach the issue of an »aesthetic ecumene« from an angle significantly different from and wider than that encompassing Eurasian philosophies but apparently excluding African thought and what is currently referred to as ethnophilosophy. ⁹

It is true that the ways of thinking highlighted by this kind of philosophy do not rely on a conceptual lexicon, a dialectical structure and a textual body of reference in their original formulations. Yet they no less conspicuously articulate customs, common beliefs and worldviews of ethnic groups in the whole of Africa and in a number of native communities scattered in the rest of the world. And since there is no justification today in denying folk philosophies their admission to the club of world philosophies, the very notion of »ecumene« — be it related to philosophy in general or to aesthetics as a branch of it — is duty bound to include both kinds of philosophies, thereby reconfiguring the body of philosophic knowledge in entirely new terms.

To further illustrate my point from within the aesthetic domain, I shall turn to a case considered by Hou Weirui of the University of Shanghai in

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

⁸ M. O'Hanlon, »'Handsome is as Handsome Does': Display and Betrayal in the Wahgi«, *Oceania* 53/4 (1983).

⁹ »Ethnophilosophy« is a term employed in the current debate on the existence and nature of African philosophy as it has been articulated by such notable scholars as Placide Tempels in his *Bantu Philosophy*, John Mbiti in his *African Philosophy and Religion*, and William Abraham in his *The Mind of Africa*, to mention just three. These and other scholars of similar orientation in African philosophy have come to be known by what Paulin Hountondji has referred to as »ethnophilosophy«. This explanation is by Fidelis U. Okafor in his learned article »In defense of Afro-Japanese Ethnophilosophy«, *Philosophy East and West*, Vol. 47, No. 3, July 1997.

On the Western notion of rationality and its relativity, see G.W. Trompf, »African Philosophy and the Relativities of Rationality. In response to Carole Pearce«, *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 24, No. 2, June 1994.

his comparative analysis of metaphor in Chinese classical poetry. I shall quote a few passages from Hou's contribution to the »Pacific Rim Conference in Transcultural Aesthetics« (University of Sydney, June 1997).¹⁰ »Literary imagery,« he says, »especially long-established and widely accepted imagery, is the crystallization of the aesthetic values and literary taste of a certain nation, and, to a certain extent, reflects its way of thinking. Therefore, the preservation of the original image is essential to the conveying of cultural flavor and national color.« ... »Imagery with strong national character arises usually from a nation's special way of life or living environment. It cannot always be treated by direct translation. When direct translation is not possible the second best choice is substitution. Substitution means finding another image which conveys a similar meaning and produces a similar effect on the readers of the target language as the original imagery does in the source language. A case in point,« Wou says, »is the treatment of *zhu* (bamboo). Bamboo is an image of vigorous and luxurious growth and the usual translation is »to spring up or grow like bamboo shoots after a spring rain«. Native readers of English may not be familiar with the way bamboo grows in spring. If we replace »bamboo« with »mushroom«, an immediate picture of rapid growth is evoked in the mind of an English reader. Equivalence, however, is only relative. »To grow like bamboo shoots after a spring rain« is used in Chinese only for rapid and vigorous growth and never for quick decay, while mushrooms, according to one definition offered in the Longman Modern English Dictionary, means »like a mushroom in a rapidity of growth and decay«. The substituted image,« concludes the author, »has to be in harmony with the entire cultural atmosphere and literary tradition of the original work.«¹¹

Hou's relevant point is that the procedure of replacing »bamboo« in the original language with »mushroom« in the target language is a rather unfaithful, though unavoidable, device whereby the resulting picture becomes something rather different.

A perceptive analysis of this syndrome of »aesthetic ineffability« is in Kuki Shūzō's treatise *The Structure of »Iki«* (»*Iki*« no *Kōzō*), which first appeared in the Japanese journal *Shisō* (»Thought«) in 1930, and is now available in an accurate English version by the Australian scholar John Clark.¹²

¹⁰ Hou W., »Bamboo or Mushroom: Imagery in Chinese Poetry and its Translation«, *Proceedings of the Pacific Rim Conference in Transcultural Aesthetics*, University of Sydney, E. Benitez ed., quoted.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

¹² Kuki S., *An Essay on Japanese Taste: The Structure of »Iki«*, translated by John Clark; edited by Sakuko Matsui and John Clark; introduction by Nakano Hajimul, Sydney, Power Publications, 1996.

According to Kuki, aesthetic concepts are subtle revealers of the ways of feeling shared by people of the same linguistic and ethnic community. The case of *iki* is in this respect illuminating. A term recurrently employed in Edo times to connote the peculiar gracefulness and *charme* possessed by the *geisha*, *iki* emanates a plethora of nuances which only native customers of the »flowered quarters« in XVIII century Edo and Kyôto could taste and emotionally enjoy in their own, unique way.

Trompf's and Wou's investigations in their respective fields bring to light two curiously equivalent, though opposite, cases of a scarce permeability of aesthetic emotion to transcultural and linguistic transfer. In the case of the Wahgi term »*ka*«, its range of meanings, pivoted on a generalized idea of »life-power«, seems however to lack specifically aesthetic connotations; whereas in the case of Japanese »*iki*«, not a deficiency but rather an excess of emotional overtones emanating from it will prove to be impervious to adequate renderings in contexts different from the original one.

Some provisional conclusions

Since the time for presenting this paper is nearly over, I shall devote the remaining minutes to focussing on a couple of factors relating to my working notion of the aesthetic ecumene.

The first of these factors concerns an increasing awareness among scholars, mostly of the younger generation (in their thirties and forties), that to approach aesthetic matters in transcultural terms is no longer, at least from the Western side, a rather bizarre attitude displayed by a handful of exoticists, but quite simply what needs to be done, and should it not be done it would be detrimental to the advancement of aesthetic research. In the last twenty years the successful attempts by a few distinguished comparative philosophers to relate Western and Asian thought in hermeneutically advanced ways, as in the case of J.J. Clarke's recent survey on *Oriental Enlightenment*,¹³ cannot but encourage endeavours of a similar quality and kind in the sphere of aesthetic studies.

The second factor concerns the notable role interdisciplinarity will have to play in future aesthetic research. Connections with all avenues of knowledge ready to provide cognitive inputs to aesthetic research have to be

¹³ J.J. Clarke, *Oriental Enlightenment. The Encounter between Asian and Western Thought*, London and New York, Routledge, 1997.

Maja Milčinski
The Aesthetics of Decay

The Japanese aesthetics of Wabi-Sabi among various interpretations can be understood as well in the sense of – »contemporary aestheticism which advocates the dissolution of the distinction between art and life.«¹ The concept of Wabi, which developed its positive and profound meaning under a strong influence of Zen Buddhism, can be translated as »loneliness; insufficiency, refined poverty; a humble life in solitude with nature as companion; to lead a solitary life, contemplating nature and appreciating the spiritual and aesthetic values underlying insufficiency.«² Wabi-Sabi, the two central concepts of Japanese aesthetics, can be found already at the transition of Chinese painting to Japan. In their later development the concepts have been remodeled in a specific Japanese way, so that today only their Japanese character is being stressed.

If we look back into Chinese philosophy, in which the Ji (in Japanese Sabi) originates, we come across it in the sense of absolute quiet, tranquility and peacefulness. However, if we try to systemize some of the common meanings of this notion, we come from a broad apparent heterogeneity into sedimental thought which approaches the tranquil support as a potential position of change, namely movement, whose mover itself remains unmoved. In Daoism, we come across the notion of ji in the Dao de jing, as well as in Zhuang Zi.

Dao de jing (25)

»There was something formed out of chaos,

That was born before Heaven and Earth.

Quiet and still! Pure and deep!

It stands on its own and doesn't change.

It can be regarded as the mother of Heaven and Earth.

I do not yet know its name:

I 'style' it 'the Way'.

¹ Amy Newman, »Aestheticism, Feminism, and the Dynamics of Reversal,« in *Aesthetics in Feminist Perspective*, ed. Hilde Hein and Carolyn Korsmeyer (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993), 193.

² Setsuko Kojima and Gene A. Crane, *A Dictionary of Japanese Culture* (Tokyo: The Japan Times, 1987), 380.

Were I forced to give it a name, I would call it 'the Great'.« ...³ that is solitary quiet, tranquil, voiceless, spaceless. In Zhuang Zi the same character appears in the connection with the state of quiet tranquility and peacefulness. In Tian dao it appears in relation with the »absence of activity – quiet sitting«.

In Buddhism we come across Ji as peace, silence, calm in connection with nirvana. It is used, in a sense, to extinguish various unnecessary ruminations, so that the ultimate reality could spring out. The various complexities of meanings that appear in Buddhism could be united in the following categories:

- calm, silent, mute, sad, tranquil, deserted;
- tranquility and silence of the truth
- in connection with the true wisdom as yoke of two virtues (truth and intelligence) that should in Buddhism lead one to salvation
- the transition into nirvana – the state without troubles and sorrows, without the movements of time – the condition for delight in peace and nirvana.

According to its meaning Sabi is Ji. It expresses the liberation of the human path from sorrow and torments. It is interesting that the other possible translations – silence, sadness, abandoned state, loneliness, negligence, melancholic standstill – lead us to the world of nirvana, which in its essence is not something joyful. It is the notion of spiritual condition of withdrawal, liberation from perplexed reflections. At the description of the place, the character is used as designation of entirely silent, mournful place without people. When the landscapes are described the character is used for a tranquil, silent, deserted condition without any voice, shape or form. In an artistic sense it reveals the impression entirely voiceless and shapeless, and as a point where everything is extinguished and there is no existence left.

In the works of early Neo-Confucians (brothers Cheng) Ji appears in connection with the demand of removing the turbulent thoughts as:

- the entire tranquility and peace
- one should wait until the point where everything is extinguished and the absolute quiet is achieved
- one should keep the inner peace and protect oneself from inner movements
- with this experience and feeling you can reach whatever place without obstructions and remain tranquil, unexcited. This is the way to accomplish the entire world.⁴

³ Lao-Tzu, *Tē-Tao Ching*, trans. Robert G. Henrichs (New York: Ballantine Books, 1989), 77.

⁴ *Ercheng quanshu fu suoyin (Complete works of the Brothers Cheng)*, ed. Zhu Xi (Tokyo: Chubun shuppansha, 1979).

The notion of Ji as a condition emptied from everything – the point where everything is extinguished, where one can find tranquility and peace, leads us to the aim of various yogic or meditative techniques, which should help us to achieve the transcendence of logical, discursive pattern of searching and gets to a basis for a different approach with oneself. It is the loss of Ego and the return into the condition where the body and mind are still uniform. There is no antagonism of body and soul, since in this state of egolessness the state of vacuity is achieved. »Aesthetic ekstasis«⁵ is not only »standing apart from self«, but reaching the state of transcending the Ego. The border between the outer world and oneself is overcome – or better said, between that which conditions us to think about the external existence of »external« world, the process in which mind's false notion about »one's« body, which cannot be separated from all the rest is overcome. The logic starts at the point where the body and mind are separated and is related to the level of intellect, whereas the body should represent the affective side of human personality. In the realm of Wabi-Sabi, however, the Sabi Kokoro is cultivated. The notion of Kokoro leads to the trans-linguistic sphere in which »the domain of internal language coincides with that of 'consciousness'«. ⁶ Kokoro itself »in its broad sense,... signifies the whole domain of inner subjectivity covering both the 'not-yet-activated' and 'already-activated', the ground and its manifestation, including images, ideas, thoughts, feelings and emotions,«⁷ the notion of Sabi Kokoro depicts the human mind, which is released from profane engagements, far away from the noise of the world dwelling in the realm of mystical silence and peace. This condition is the liberation from human sorrow and gloomy rumination.

To give oneself entirely without any second thought, but still stay tranquil, unexcited, this is the basis from which one can reach the entire world. The condition of complete tranquility and the experience of Ji is the condition for anything coming into being. Another dimension of Buddhist notion of Ji and in later development Sabi is important, namely the one where the condition is reached where there is no alternative or differentiation anymore. How did the Japanese understand the notions of life and death in this context, on the level of realization of the truth in the sense of a psychophysical awareness far above the pure intellect? It is namely the spiritual level on which the bifurcations of good-evil, black-white, beautiful-

⁵ Hilde Hein, »Refining Feminist Theory,« in *Aesthetics in Feminist Perspective*, ed. Hilde Hein and Carolyn Korsmeyer, 11.

⁶ Toshihiko and Toyo Isutsu, *The Theory of Beauty in the Classical Aesthetics of Japan* (The Hague/Boston/London: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1981), 10.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 8.

ugly, life-death are overcome since it opens up the way of transcendence in a sense of the wisdom of ultimate reality. It is the level far beyond the one described in Nietzsche as »Life itself recognizes no solidarity, no 'equal rights', between the healthy and the degenerate parts of an organism: one must excise the latter – or the whole will perish. – Sympathy for decadents, equal rights for the ill-constituted – that would be the profoundest immorality, that would be antinature itself as morality!«⁸ It is rather an activity which leads one to a transrational level, which is not inferior to the rational cognition, since it encompasses all kinds and grades of experience.

We must take into consideration the fact that in the realm of Buddhist aesthetics, particularly in the domain of Wabi-Sabi, rationality as such does not offer us universal, common, and generally valid standpoint, since many aspects of the concepts under investigation can be experienced in meditation and not understood just with knowledge, by pure erudition. They appear by following a radical empirical experience – experience of intuitive recognition of the things in their undifferentiated unity. In the process of such an experience, the level of tranquility is reached, the absolute quiet, Sabi and voidness that are the basis of the profoundest and most important insights. One of them being the notion of death and decay which in the light of oneness of things and events never gained negative connotation, or to say it with Zhuang Zi: »Life is the companion of death, death is the beginning of life. Who understands their workings? Man's life is a coming together of breath. If it comes together, there is life; if it scatters, there is death. And if life and death are companions to each other, then what is there for us to be anxious about?«⁹ It is the attitude which is in accord with the notion of interrelatedness of everything: »The ten thousand things are really one. We look on some as beautiful because they are rare or unearthly; we look on others as ugly because they are foul and rotten. But the foul and rotten may turn into the rare and unearthly, and the rare and unearthly may turn into the foul and rotten. So it is said, You have only to comprehend the one breath that is the world. The sage never ceases to value oneness.«¹⁰

In the Buddhist context the metaphysical notion of impermanence, transience or ephemerality was created. It supports the Buddhist idea that all material things are considered to have come into existence through some cause and are subjected to the process of creation, abiding, transformation

⁸ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale (New York: Random House, 1967), 734.

⁹ Chuang Tzu, *The Complete Works*, trans. Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), 235.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 236.

and extinction. This process, moreover, is cyclical: all things are born and die over and over again. The cycle of rebirth can be escaped only by eliminating all desire and thus attaining nirvana or enlightenment, the only stable, nontransient state. Such an attitude is present in the aesthetics of classical Japanese works like *The Tales of Ise*, and it also makes it possible to find beauty in its vanishing and to accept the fact that the transience and evanescence of all things make everything even more beautiful.

The Japanese model has not offered any illusions. At various stages of Japanese history it was felt necessary to educate people in confronting the inevitability of corporeal death. Therefore the temple images were formed which are very naturalistic and therefore even more persuasive than the frescoes of the Death dance in Europe, where death takes the form of the skeleton. The Japanese images take a different form and have a slightly different idea behind them. The fact that humanity is sentenced to death and to impermanence is shown by the temple images, which depict the entire process of decay of the human corpse, from death to final disintegration. Such was just one of the ways in which the deep acceptance of death has been shown in the realm of aesthetics in the Japanese history. The other one is the tradition of writing the death poems, the poems in which the Buddhist monk, philosopher or poet expressed his views on life and death on the verge of his own death. Usually they were written by Zen monks, some of which were believed to have the power of predicting their own moment of death. The poems show us the attitude of these Buddhists towards death, which is not something unexpected, an event which they would want to evade or postpone.

The blossom became one of the dominant symbols of the transience of human existence and its beauty. In various stages of the year it got either the undertone of hope, longing or sadness, depending on the stage in which the blossom has been. Unlike Europe which cherishes the stage of the full-blossom and India which worshipped the blossom itself, Japan developed a deep aesthetics of dead blossoms lying on moss or stones. This reflects the worship of the entire life-cycle, including the stage of decomposition and decay, and does not worship only youth, vigor and vitality.

The aloneness, solitude, which is not loneliness, with its negative connotation has been cultivated as the way of positive alienation.¹¹ In the death poems, also it is an important undertone, since it makes us aware of the fact that death is the very moment which is essentially experienced by each in-

¹¹ Futing Liao, »Positive Alienation and its Reflection in Taoist Thought,« *International Sociology*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (March 1989), 5-17.

dividual alone, without the interaction with the others which characterizes the life. The Japanese attitude towards death, or better, towards acceptance of it in all its manifestations, including the stages of dissolution and decay, has often been understood wrongly, like certain morbid mysterious and esoteric practice. However, it cultivates the sense of beauty, which is present also in the death poems, based on the equilibrium and equanimity and on subjective fullness of Awareness, born from a specific form of contemplation, which enables a continuity between the inner and outer speech of the poet. This can be experienced only on the basis of enlightenment, a state in which the consciousness has liberated itself from any form of theoretical rumination and has reached the natural simplicity very close to the Daoist practice of wu-wei, the absence of any form of intentional activity, which influenced also their attitude towards death: »I received life because the time had come; I will lose it because the order of things passes on. Be content with this time and dwell in this order and then neither sorrow nor joy can touch you. In ancient times this was called the 'freeing of the bound'. There are those who cannot free themselves, because they are bound by things. But nothing can ever win against Heaven – that's the way it's always been. What would I have to resent?«¹²

Sabi, which in its later development has been connected with simple, rustic utensils for the tea ceremony, can be translated as: »patina; agedness; solitary look; rustic simplicity; the quiet beauty of things in a state of natural decay; active appreciation of the value of things seemingly negative, such as rusticity, agedness, loneliness, deficiency«¹³ has been cultivated also in the landscape painting. The solitary angler, never seen from the front, enclosed and surrounded in the haze, represents the tranquil beauty of a highly realized man and his place in the Cosmos in desolation and solitude, covered with a patina of simplicity. Striking, with the air of naturalness, transcending the notion of what would be called the poverty that is, indifferent to material luxury. In the midst of life but still far from others, distanced from them, as to be fishing, diving deeply into the ultimate reality holding to it in its suchness. Deeply aware of the fact that when we most badly need a neighbour, we always happen to be alone, he sits in the boat, knowing that the path of discovery has to be walked by each of us alone. What would be called his own Self has been identified with the ultimate reality which left no room for feeling lonely. Everything was one and realizing this, one is not separated from anything anymore. In this realm of nonattachment nothing-

¹² Chuang Tzu, *The Complete Works*, 84-5.

¹³ Setsuko Kojima and Gene A. Crane, *A Dictionary of Japanese Culture*, 278.

ness became the basis of existence and the distinction of him and other disappeared. Knowing his own heart, he was pursuing the activity not yet differentiated into this or that. There he was meeting with original face.

With no expectations and hopes from the Other and for the future, the fisherman, solitary angler, knows that it is not the virtue, which is the basis of human relationships, but insufficiency. Virtue being distinctively human and very limited, shaping the temporally agreements that regulate people's coming together, being together and separating during their momentary existence in the flow of eons. With this realization, there is no space for mourning and recovery from it, since the solitary angler represents the unlimited spiritual richness of the realized man, the quality of satoric awareness. Therefore, he is able to place his life in the proper relation to the universe. Leading a solitary life he contemplates the enormity of all things and his own powerlessness. In his embodiment of Wabi-Sabi, he represents the refined poverty and rustic simplicity, the profound aesthetic appreciation of poverty, deficiency, loneliness, agedness. There is nothing to tend to or aim at, no remoteness and no horizons of the future well-being anymore. Still, the mind is directed to infinity, free from frustrations caused by limitations, aware of the permanent changes of nature as well as the ones in touch with it. The transience gives the deep appreciation of the life as such, its shortness and each and every moment in it. As the inhabitant of the world of Wabi-Sabi, his state goes beyond conceptualization, beyond being grasped by the words, since it transcends the expression. Subtle intuition gives room for nature to apply patina of age and appreciate all transformations as being each in themselves beautiful.

The aesthetics of decay, so well expressed in the Sino-Japanese concepts of Wabi-Sabi (ji), as well as in the tradition of Japanese death poems, directs us to the fact that the solution of the existence puzzle is not to be searched for outside, but in our heart-minds. The pure, absolute reality in its suchness, as revealed to the enlightened mind is beyond the distinctions as: beautiful-ugly, good-bad, death-life, Wabi and Sabi. Therefore it gives no room for the illusions, since it represents the sobering down from the impoisonment of the existential illusions. Various techniques of achieving harmony and the practices of purification of one's heart formed part of the realm of aesthetics in the Sino-Japanese tradition. The individual spirit has been developed by mind-expanding exercises, and the sense of the illusionary Self or Ego has been undercut through the direct experience of the universe and one's place in it. Such a process is developed on a level different from the logically-discursive one, which in the Buddhist context gets transcended by the switch of consciousness, where the distinctions reveal themselves as illusion-

ary and arbitrary. Death poems point at the liberation from the bonds of death and life by the deep insight into human existence, which is experienced on the level where one teaches »with the voice of silence«. ¹⁴

The initial stage of my research of Wabi-Sabi has been conducted in 1989-90 while I was the Japan Foundation Fellow to which I wish to express my appreciation.

¹⁴ *Japanese Death Poems*, ed. Yoel Hoffmann (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, 1986), 91.

Evanghélou Moutsopoulos
La création musicale comme expérience esthétique

Le champ dans lequel s'exerce l'action de la musique a été de tout temps un champ privilégié pour le questionnement philosophique, dont l'aspect esthétique n'est pas le moindre. Nombreux sont les philosophes s'y sont référés et très diversifiées les doctrines qui en ont résulté. Il suffit de mentionner les noms de Pythagore et de Platon, d'Archytas et de Boèce, d'Augustin et de Thomas, de Leibniz et de Rousseau, sans oublier les mythes cosmogoniques toujours en vigueur dans diverses religions. Je m'attarderai sur trois questions majeures résultant de la mise au point du problème, à savoir celles de l'importance de l'expérience esthétique en général; de la signification de la création musicale dans ce contexte; et du rôle que l'expérience de celle-ci est capable de jouer dans l'élaboration d'une axiologie de l'objet esthétique à la fois créée et savourée, avant de tirer quelques conclusions relatives à l'évaluation de la contribution du fait musical pour une meilleure compréhension de la créativité, du point de vue esthétique.

L'expérience esthétique

On désignera d'emblée la spécificité de l'expérience esthétique en général par rapport à l'expérience tout court, en évoquant l'homologie des structures véhiculées par l'objet de cette expérience et des structures viscérales du sujet contemplateur, qui procure une satisfaction profonde dans la mesure où l'homologie est parfaite, relative si elle est partielle, ainsi que Platon et ceux qui s'en sont directement inspirés l'ont déjà envisagée¹. À l'évidence, si une telle homologie est inexistante, une absence de satisfaction, voire une aversion et une répulsion envers l'objet en résultera. Dans ce cas, il ne conviendrait même pas de parler d'expérience esthétique, puisqu'elle s'avère complètement négative. Cependant le système de structures viscérales réceptives est susceptible de s'adapter au milieu environnant artistique

¹ Cf. Platon, *Timée*, 80 a-b; Arist. Quintilien, *De mus.*, p. 117 Meibom; cf. E. Moutsopoulos, *La musique dans l'œuvre de Platon*, Paris, P.U.F., 1959; 2e éd., 1989, pp. 38-44; Idem, *La participation musicale chez Plotin*, *Philosophia*, 1, 1971, pp. 379-389.

et culturel, et de s'agencer en un ensemble de critères «gustatifs» d'après lesquels les divers objets esthétiques peuvent être évalués et appréciés. Plus cet ensemble est orienté vers la réception de structures esthétiques particulières à une culture donnée, plus il lui est difficile de s'adapter à celles qui se rattachent à une culture différente. Ce même ensemble ne résiste néanmoins guère aux structures esthétiques universellement reconnues et inhérentes au grand art. Ces considérations s'appliquent, certes, à tous les arts, mais tout particulièrement à l'expérience esthétique musicale. Le langage musical est universel par excellence, tout en ayant la faculté d'être extrêmement spécial à des cultures marginales qui communiquent difficilement entre elles. Une conscience esthétique peu ou mal cultivée peut alors éprouver un sentiment de réclusion et afficher une «fin de non-recevoir» vis-à-vis de tout objet esthétique provenant d'une culture étrangère à la culture (ou, et c'est le cas le plus fréquent, la sous-culture) où elle est ancrée. Cette réclusion et cette «fin de non-recevoir» sont même susceptibles d'affecter des objets esthétiques dont le langage relève de l'universalité propre au grand art, provoquant l'isolement et le refus de ces consciences esthétiques débilés à toute ouverture vers d'autres horizons. Dans un souci de fausse disponibilité elles n'admettent que des produits musicaux de facture non pas artistique, mais artisanale, qui affichent un faux-semblant de langage universel, sont privées, en fait, de toute structure et de toute originalité propres aux créations du grand art. Ainsi se perpétue l'éternel malentendu culturel qui fait du grand art, déjà difficile d'accès, l'apanage de certains esprits créateurs et de certaines élites contemplatrices, et demeure exclu de l'intérêt, ne serait-ce que limité, dont pourraient bénéficier les masses, en même temps que s'amplifie, en raison d'une diffusion de plus en plus soutenue par une technologie galopante au service d'une commercialisation sans cesse accrue de l'aspect musical de l'entreprise du spectacle et de la distraction, une société de consommation indifférente à tout questionnement éventuel, et persistant dans son insignifiance béate. On se réjouira néanmoins de constater que ces techniques de production, de reproduction et de commercialisation sont simultanément mises aussi au service de la grande musique, pour une meilleure diffusion de l'art musical à résonance universelle.

La création musicale

Ici encore, mention sera faite, au départ, de l'homologie déjà envisagée entre structures esthétiques viscérales et objectives. La création et la

contemplation musicales sont les deux aspects complémentaires d'un processus unique dans sa continuité. Dans ce contexte, on admettra que, sur le plan de la création artistique, notamment de la création musicale, le créateur procède, par homologie, à l'objectivation de ses structures viscérales au niveau de l'œuvre qu'il crée. Ce faisant, il affronte une dialectique aux termes de laquelle il doit éliminer toutes les particularités de ses propres structures internes individuelles tout en cherchant d'une part à renforcer l'expression de leurs aspects les plus conformes au langage musical prévalant, c'est-à-dire les plus universellement acceptés, et, d'autre part, à en préserver les traits les plus personnels pour conférer à sa création une marque d'originalité, certes, mais surtout l'expression la plus adéquate de ses propres vécus: dialectique subtile et difficile à respecter, mais nécessaire à l'écoulement des formes créées vers des consciences prêtes à recevoir son message intime. Universalité et unicité différenciée à l'extrême demeurent ainsi les deux pôles entre lesquels le créateur se meut tout au long du *continuum* créationnel que constituent l'inspiration, la gestation, l'ébauche, l'organisation, la structuration, la formulation et la finition de l'œuvre musicale. Chacune de ces étapes se prolonge dans la suivante qui, à son tour, prend ses racines dans celle qui la précède. Un flux incessant les traverse toutes dans les deux sens. On est en présence d'un mouvement qui rappelle étrangement le mécanisme de la procession et de l'*épistrophé* néoplatoniciennes: là aussi, les hypostases se délimitent en entités quasi autonomes, mais sont, par ailleurs, reliées entre elles par leur propre fluidité qui résulte de leur tendance à s'épancher les unes envers les autres. Toute proportion gardée, une mobilité semblable se retrouve à l'intérieur de la conscience du créateur, au point que, ne serait-ce que dans des cas rares, la forme définitive de l'œuvre crée procure de précieux renseignements sur les étapes successives que son instauration a traversées. Tout au long de cette démarche le créateur s'impose à la fois comme démiurge et comme contemplateur. La *Genèse* offre déjà, quant à la création *ex nihilo*, un témoignage de cette double efficence. Après chaque étape de la création du monde le Créateur s'arrête devant sa création: à l'instar de l'artiste satisfait du résultat de son labeur, «Dieu vit que c'était beau.»²

² Cf. Idem, Contemplation et création dans l'art religieux, *La filosofía cristiana hoy. Primer Congreso Mundial de Filosofía Cristiana*, t. 2., Córdoba (Arg.), Univ. Nac. de Córdoba, 1980, pp. 933-942; L'œuvre d'art et son statut de témoignage, *Diotima*, 18, 1990, pp. 99-100; L'artiste, créateur et critique, *Critique et différence, Actes du XVIIIe Congrès de l'ASPLF* (Hammamet, 1990), Tunis, Soc. Tunisienne des Études Philosophiques, pp. 551-555.

Au risque d'être taxé de «platonisme», j'ai indiqué à diverses reprises et de diverses manières³ comment l'artiste créateur débute par une conception globale (ou très particulière, voire élémentaire⁴) de l'œuvre à réaliser et comment, à l'opposé du Créateur de l'Univers, il y parvient après une longue élaboration de son projet initial. Chez le Créateur divin l'intelligence s'identifie avec la volonté, et celle-ci avec la puissance de réalisation: il suffit que le verbe divin soit prononcé pour que la création soit effective et exactement telle qu'elle a été conçue. Il en est tout autrement pour le créateur humain: obligé qu'il est d'œuvrer laborieusement, il tente, quant à lui, d'arriver à ses fins par une succession d'efforts dont aucun n'aboutit à l'instauration d'une forme définitive qui représente exactement l'idée qu'il s'en est fait initialement; elle en dévie tant soit peu. Dès lors, pour la bonne marche de son travail, il doit concevoir, d'après le résultat de son premier effort, une forme nouvelle dérivée, pour ainsi dire, de la forme initialement conçue et comme son prolongement. À son tour, cette forme dérivée non réalisée pleinement verra, en vertu d'une nouvelle déviation, une nouvelle dérivée conçue à partir d'elle, et ainsi de suite. Il s'agit en l'occurrence d'un problème de maîtrise de la part du créateur: plus il est maître de son art et plus le nombre des dérivées intermédiaires sera réduit. Une nouvelle dialectique apparaît ici, aux termes de laquelle le créateur doit à chaque pas osciller entre dogmatisme apriorique et pragmatisme finitif. Ce processus a été admirablement illustré à propos de la musique de Beethoven⁵, mais il est également décelable dans d'autres formes artistiques, notamment en peinture où l'examen aux rayons «X» permet de distinguer certaines couches inférieures d'un tableau recouvertes en raison de quelque »regret« de l'artiste⁶. Cependant, on tiendra compte également de l'importance du gé-

³ Cf. entre autres, Vers une phénoménologie de la création, *Revue Philosophique*, 86, 1961, pp. 261-291; L'expérience esthétique: contemplation et expérimentation, *Revue de Synthèse*, 1963, pp. 303-305; Alternative Processes in Artistic Creation, *Proceedings of the 8th International Wittgenstein Symposium*, Part I, Wien, Hölder, 1984, pp. 107-113.

⁴ Cf. Idem, L'imagination formative, *ibid.*, pp. 389-403 et *Annales d'Esthétique*, 2, 1963, pp. 64-67; Langage et inspiration poétique: le témoignage Valéryen, *Recherches sur la Philosophie et le Langage* (Grenoble), 11, 1989, Valéry: *La philosophie, les arts, le langage*, pp. 179-181.

⁵ Cf. Romain Rolland, *Beethoven*, à propos des esquisses successives du thème initial de la marche funèbre de l'*Eroica*.

⁶ Cf. E. Moutsopoulos, Les structures de la temporalité chez Watteau, *Antoine Watteau, le peintre, son temps et sa légende*, Paris-Genève, Champion-Slatkine, 1987, pp. 143-148, notamment pp. 146-147; L'art comme travail et l'artiste comme travailleur, *Rotonde*, 1971/3, pp. 277-279, et *Questionnements philosophiques*, t. 1, *Conscience et création*, Athènes, Hermès, 1971, pp. 327-332.

nie du créateur: en effet, le créateur génial ne s'attardera pas à œuvrer laborieusement sur chacune des dérivées conçues successivement, mais dépassera d'emblée cette dialectique en orientant sa création dans une direction carrément inattendue. Ce «coup de génie» risque d'arrêter brusquement un processus déjà en cours, mais se révèle toujours salutaire pour l'œuvre à instaurer qui se voit *ex abrupto* réalisable sous un autre visage. Les procédés de cette nature sont différenciables à l'infini. Il convient seulement de ne point négliger, parmi eux, des cas extrêmes, tel celui de l'intégration d'œuvres ou de parties d'œuvres précédentes dans des œuvres nouvelles que l'on relève chez J.-S. Bach, Beethoven ou Bizet, par exemple. Le compositeur se rend librement à toutes ces possibilités et opte pour celles qui conviennent le mieux à la situation particulière qu'il affronte. Néanmoins toute initiative à prendre en l'occurrence est pour lui un occasion supplémentaire d'une nouvelle expérience esthétique vécue.

À la lumière de ce qui vient d'être souligné précédemment, le compositeur maître de son art aura peu de difficultés à créer une œuvre rigoureusement construite. Une fugue, par exemple, suivra un plan de construction savamment élaboré (d'après un modèle quasi définitivement arrêté), dont l'unité sera assurée grâce à l'utilisation répétée d'un thème unique selon les divers procédés dans lesquels on reconnaît le principe d'imitation. Entre les deux groupes thème-réponse de l'exposition initiale un semblant de divertissement est susceptible d'être inséré. Par contre, entre deux apparitions consécutives du thème à des degrés différents de la tonalité choisie, le développement d'un véritable divertissement est de rigueur. Ainsi des périodes de tension et de relâchement voient le jour alternativement, témoignant de l'objectivation de structures internes dont le compositeur extériorise la signification. Il les adapte de son mieux à des structures auxquelles il suppose que ses auditeurs répondront de manière universelle. Il compte sur leur consolidation progressive, d'après le retentissement qu'elles ont eu préalablement auprès d'une succession de publics plus ou moins homogènes et avant d'acquérir une portée universelle. L'alternance entre tensions et relâchements se poursuit grâce à la tension extrême que représente la strette avant que l'œuvre se termine dans l'apaisement que procure sa solution finale. De même, l'unité de l'ensemble du premier mouvement de la *Symphonie n° 5, en ut mineur*, op. 67, de Beethoven, est assurée grâce à l'emploi d'un motif de tierce descendante rythmiquement scandée par la double répétition du son aigu initial. Encore plus simple est le motif «ré, ut dièse, ré» auquel Brahms a recours pour construire, à partir de lui, l'unité formelle de l'*Allegro non troppo* de sa *Symphonie n° 2, en Ré majeur*, op. 73, en l'utilisant de manière aussi bien mélodique que rythmique, afin de le rendre

moins apparent, mais aussi plus substantiellement consolidant et fixatif de l'unit  de sa composition. Il existe, par ailleurs, des symphonies enti res construites sur un seul motif, sur une seule id e qui les transperce et les traverse d'un bout   l'autre. Le souci d'unit  n'est toutefois pas toujours aussi rigoureusement manifeste. Chacun des morceaux dont tout un ensemble de pi ces pour piano de Debussy est form  pr sente une unit  certaine en d pit de son manque de forme pr cise, au sens traditionnel du terme, ou plut t en d pit de la forme totalement originale qu'il  pouse et qui suscite des r sonances enti rement nouvelles chez l'auditeur en provoquant le r veil de structures visc rales latentes. En recourant   des structures  prouv es, mais qu'il renouvelle sans cesse par son originalit , autant qu'  des structures qu'il d couvre lui-m me en «violant les sym tries»⁷, autrement dit en enfreignant des r gles  tablies, le compositeur s'engage dans une suite de d couvertes fortuites ou savamment pr par es qui sont pour lui autant d'exp riences esth tiques qu'il  prouve personnellement avant de les communiquer   son audience r ceptive moyennant le caract re structurel universel de son apport. C'est ainsi que progresse et  volue le langage musical qui, lui aussi, se veut universellement compr hensible.

L'axiologie de l'objet esth tique

Il n'existe pas d'exp rience esth tique qui ne soit une pure  valuation de ce qui est   la fois sa cause et son objet. Tout un syst me, ouvert   l'infini, de cat gories esth tiques forme un arsenal de la conscience, disponible   cet effet⁸. Le compositeur s'en empare dans le but d'en qualifier les produits de son inventivit , avant de laisser ce soin   ses auditeurs. Tout devient possible sur ce plan gr ce   la m diation exerc e par les structures universelles objectiv es dans une cr ation musicale. Pour sa part, le compositeur v hicule ses propres structures visc rales dans ses cr ations qui les v hiculent,   leur tour, jusqu'aux consciences des contemplateurs o  elles suscitent des  motions esth tiques. Cette m diation s'entendrait comme une simple transmission indirecte, n' tait-ce l' uvre musicale qui, elle, une fois instaur e, existe d sormais en soi comme valeur unique et irr p tible qui

⁷ Cf. Idem, Le viol des sym tries et le *kairos* comme *m tron* de l'art, *Metrum of Art, Third International Conference on Aesthetics*, Krak w-Przegorzaly, 1991, pp. 134-137, et *Po sis et Techn . Id es pour une philosophie de l'art*, t. 2, *Instauration et vibration*, Montr al, Montmorency, 1994, pp. 23-27.

⁸ Cf. Idem, *Les cat gories esth tiques. Introduction   une axiologie de l'objet esth tique*, Ath nes, Herm s, 1970; 2e  d. illustr e, Ath nes, Ars nid s, 1996, pp. 11-17.

irradie en toute direction. Elle devient ainsi, dans son ensemble, un objet d'expérience esthétique non seulement pour l'auditeur, mais encore pour son créateur qui s'y reconnaît d'une part à un niveau existentiel en se référant au processus particulier d'instauration qu'il a suivi (*creo ergo sum*)⁹, et d'autre part à un niveau purement ontologique, en raison de l'assurance (hélas! passagère) que lui procure la présence de la réalité esthétique instaurée, normalement destinée à lui survivre (*exegi monumentum aere perennius*)¹⁰: assurance passagère par le fait que le créateur, son admiration première (elle-même entendue comme une expérience esthétique) pour sa création, vite dépassée, se passionne aussitôt pour une nouvelle expérience esthétique procurée par l'instauration d'une autre œuvre envisagée dans son ensemble et dans ses détails, autrement dit par chacune des étapes de sa réalisation. Le créateur d'une œuvre musicale, comme tout créateur, se nourrit des expériences esthétiques répétées que lui offre sa propre activité.

Au terme des réflexions qui précèdent il ressort que l'expérience esthétique en matière de création musicale résulte, pour le créateur, de l'élaboration patiente de chacune des parties dont une composition est, coup après coup, constituée, autant que de la contemplation de l'ensemble; et, pour l'auditeur, de la découverte de l'unité de l'œuvre écoutée autant que de son analyse mentale qui fait réapparaître à rebours la suite des expériences esthétiques particulières qu'à l'origine elle a procurées au compositeur par étapes, lors de son élaboration. Cette vision des choses serait privée de sens si on se refusait à admettre, ne serait-ce que comme hypothèse de travail, le principe de l'existence d'une homologie entre structures viscérales et structures objectives entrevu par Platon¹¹. Ce principe semble pouvoir expliquer à lui seul l'existence indubitable d'une «dialectique du plaire» telle qu'elle apparaît déjà dans l'esthétique de Kant¹², et qui associe la stricte subjectivité du plaisir esthétique à sa prétention légitime à une validité universelle.

⁹ Cf. Idem, Vers une phénoménologie de la création, *in fine*.

¹⁰ Cf. Horace, *Carmina*, III, 30, 1.

¹¹ Cf. *supra*, et la n. 1.

¹² Cf. Kant, *Critique du jugement*, §§ 31-33; 36-37; 39-40; 56-57. Cf. E. Moutsopoulos, *Forme et subjectivité dans l'esthétique kantienne*, Aix-en-Provence, Ophrys, 1964; 2e éd., 1997, pp. 85-120.

Asanuma Keiji *Sens de la matière*

D'après ce que dit Platon dans «Le Sophiste», le domaine de la technique de production se divise en deux: divine et humaine. Celle-ci se divise elle-même en deux: une partie productive de réalité et les deux parties productives d'images, dont l'une est la production de l'«eikon» et l'autre celle du «phantasme» (265-266). Dans le contexte du «Sophiste», la technique de phantasme est opposé indubitablement à la technique d'eikon et donc doit être distingué distinctement de la technique imitative au sens stricte, dont le principe est la similitude entre l'original et l'image. Cependant, Platon considère, dans *La République*, la peinture (un des genres représentatifs de la technique imitative), comme l'imitation de ce qui s'apparaît au sujet, c'est-à-dire l'imitation de l'apparence, dont le principe est la similitude entre l'image et l'apparence (598a-b). L'apparence changerait au gré de l'attitude d'un sujet et s'accompagnerait occasionnellement de la déformation de l'original ou de l'addition de quelques qualités arbitraires à celui-ci. S'il en est ainsi, il serait possible de dire que, tout en s'obeissant au principe de la similitude, l'image contient en elle-même, comme son moment indispensable, quelques qualités arbitrairement ajoutées. Et, en conséquence de cela, on pourrait dire aussi que la peinture ou la technique imitative en général doit être regardée comme l'imitation de l'aspect ou de la surface d'un objet qui s'apparaît au sujet et, en ce sens, la réduction d'un objet à la qualité purement sensible ou esthétique: son image contient déjà en elle-même le moment subjectif.

C'est ainsi qu'on peut supposer deux sortes de l'imitation: l'une dont le principe est la similitude entre l'image et l'original, l'autre dont le principe est celle entre l'image et l'apparence. Celle-là est l'imitation au sens étroit et peut être qualifiée aussi de l'imitation objective, parce que le moment arbitraire en est exclu autant que possible et c'est le principe de l'objet à imiter qui y règne. Dans le cas de celle-ci, il y a de la place pour l'activité subjective, qui a la tendance de devenir vive de plus en plus. Ce qui est imité n'est plus l'objet lui-même mais l'objet qui s'apparaît au sujet ou l'objet qui est incorporé dans la conscience de peintre: la représentation. Le principe de l'objet n'y est plus dominant et cède sa place graduellement au

principe du sujet, et enfin il y aurait une relation antagoniste entre deux principes: c'est ici qu'on peut parler de l'imitation subjective.

Bien qu'il soit impossible de supposer en fait l'imitation qui manquent totalement au moment subjectif, on pourrait supposer en principe l'imitation objective en son état parfait et le simulacre comme son produit. Ayant conscience de quelques qualités sensibles d'un objet, celui qui perçoit le simulacre aurait peut-être la croyance parfaite qu'il perçoit actuellement l'objet lui-même. Il lui serait impossible de connaître que la qualité sensible du simulacre a sa base ontique sur l'autre matière que celle de l'original, que le simulacre est produit par un autre que celui qui a produit l'original.

Or, en se reportant à la classification de l'imitation que fait Aristote au premier chapitre de *La poétique* (1447a), on pourrait distinguer trois éléments de l'imitation: les éléments objectif, matériel et subjectif¹. Si l'imitation est parfaite comme mentionné tout à l'heure, celui qui perçoit son produit (le simulacre) n'aurait jamais conscience des éléments subjectif et matériel. En d'autres mots, la disparition phénoménale de ces deux éléments serait la condition indispensable pour l'imitation parfaite ou idéale.

Rudolf Arnheim parle, dans son *Film als Kunst*, que l'image filmique (das Filmbild) comme matière du film est dangereuse pour le cinéaste, parce qu'elle est trop ressemblante à l'objet réel². Pour lui, l'art a sa base sur «le sentiment naturel de l'homme pour la symétrie et la proportion» et n'est jamais de produire encore une fois ce qui est déjà dans la nature. La fin propre de l'art est de produire la forme dé-réalisée propre à lui et pour cela il est nécessaire que la matière soit suffisamment caractéristique pour la rélité. C'est à cause de la manque de cette caractéristique que l'image filmique est dangereuse pour le cinéaste. En d'autres mots, l'anéantissement de la caractéristique de matière ou la transparence de la matière pour l'objet serait la condition de la coïncidence de l'image et de l'original; on pourrait qualifier l'image qui coïncide avec l'original de «simulacre». La matière est devenue transparente pour l'objet aussi bien que le simulacre est devenu tout opaque pour la conscience du receptrice et ainsi cache le sujet de l'imitation derrière lui. Quant au sujet de l'imitation, il est possible de dire qu'il doit obéir au principe de l'objet. L'important n'est pas de se manifester lui-même ou d'exprimer sa personnalité mais de rendre transparente la matière pour l'objet.

¹ Ce que fait Aristote lui-même est la classification par l'objet, le moyen (la matière) et la manière, mis, parce que la manière est définie par l'attitude de ce qui imite, il serait possible de la considérer comme l'élément subjectif de l'imitation.

² Rudolf Arnheim, *Film als Kunst*, Rowohlt, Berlin, 1932, S.51-56.

Dans le cas de l'imitation parfaite ou idéale, c'est-à-dire la technique d'eikon au sens de Platon, l'élément subjectif est exclu complètement. Le dévouement du sujet de l'imitation pour l'objet y serait la condition nécessaire et cela signifierait peut-être qu'il y ait la différence ou la distance ontologique absolue entre l'objet et le sujet. Et c'est justement le cadre fondamental pour cette espèce de l'imitation. Or, on pourrait supposer un tout autre cadre, dans lequel l'homme se situe au centre et tous les autres deviennent l'être pour l'homme (das Gegen-stand). Dans ce cadre, la signification de l'objet aussi bien que la relation entre l'objet et le sujet change radicalement: le monde objectif ne se suffit plus en soi et devient ce qui apparaît chaque fois pour le sujet qui se situe (sich einstellen) arbitrairement dans le monde. De plus, en prenant arbitrairement sa position (die Einstellung), le sujet incorporerait le monde objectif dans son monde intérieur; en d'autres mots, le sujet voudrait rendre présent (re-présenter) le monde objectif dans son monde intérieur. Ce qui est en question ici, ce n'est pas le monde objectif extérieur à la conscience mais le monde objectif rendu présent (re-présenté) dans la conscience: la représentation.

Cela va sans dire que ce nouveau cadre n'est pas approprié à l'imitation idéale. S'il y a encore la possibilité de l'imitation, elle changerait sa caractéristique radicalement: au lieu du monde objectif, ce serait peut-être la représentation qui devient son objet. Imiter la représentation, c'est de rendre transparente la matière pour la représentation par l'activité du sujet; en d'autres mots, de rendre présent (re-présenter) la représentation pour soi-même et pour l'autrui. Le sujet de l'imitation, subordonné autrefois presque parfaitement au principe de l'objet, se manifeste ici et rivalise avec l'objet, et l'objet de l'imitation, extérieur là au sujet, devient ici la représentation, qui est née de la relation entre objet et sujet et elle-même le produit de l'activité subjective. Ainsi on peut parler de la subjectivation de l'imitation ou l'imitation subjective: la représentation (la re-présentation de la représentation). L'acte du sujet dans le processus de la représentation pourrait être résumé comme suit: *primo*, se situer arbitrairement dans le monde, *secundo*, objectiver la nature pour lui, *tertio*, produire sa représentation propre et enfin, réaliser la transparence de la matière pour la représentation.

Dans tous les deux espèces de l'imitation – objective et subjective –, ce qui règne sur le processus fondamental, c'est l'objet aussi bien que le sujet mais non pas la matière, dont la caractéristique doit être anéantie pour réaliser la transparence pour deux autres éléments. Comme dit Adorno, «le choix des matières, l'application et la limitation dans son utilisation, est essentiel pour la production»³, pourtant, au moins en ce qui concerne la

³ Theodor Adorno, *Aesthetische Theorie*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1955, S.222.

production artistique, on a considéré que la matière n'ait aucune fonction essentielle. Elle n'est que la difficulté pour la production artistique et l'artiste doit faire son effort pour la surmonter: le produit ne doit pas garder aucune trace de cet effort et, comme dit Kant, il doit être perçu autant que si c'était le produit de la nature. Dans la pensée esthétique moderne, la matière a été regardée, en général, comme le support de l'être de l'œuvre d'art, qui n'ait pas d'autre signification – l'exemple en est la pensée de Benedetto Croce.

Dans ses livres *Das Problem des geistigen Seins* et *Aesthetik*, Nicolai Hartmann a analysé la structure de l'œuvre d'art comme l'esprit objectivé (*der objektivierte Geist*) et souligné le rôle important de la matière dans l'objectivation, mais c'est surtout Theodor Adorno qui a donné une toute nouvelle signification à la matière (*das Material*). Il a vu la spécificité de l'art moderne (*die neue Kunst*) dans la forme de la communication de ce qui est incommunicable et voulu l'éclaircir par une relation ironique entre l'esprit et la matière⁴. Il est fort probable que tout cela reflète la tendance de l'art depuis la fin de dix-neuvième siècle jusqu'au présent: artistes dont il a parlé volontiers sont Kafka, Schönberg, Beckett et les autres. Parce qu'il est impossible de parler ici de tout cela, citons un seul exemple: l'œuvre de Monet.

En considérant que le réalisme est la reproduction des objets réels dans leur relation significative réelle et l'impressionnisme celle de leur apparences sensibles, quelques chercheurs regardent celui-ci comme le prolongement de celui-là. Il est certain que les peintres impressionnistes ont voulu reproduire la couleur apparaissant à leurs yeux telle qu'elle est. Mais cela résulterait que la couleur, libérée de l'objet, devient la couleur apparente (*die scheinbare Farbe*). La couleur, enfermée autrefois dans le contour de l'objet et n'étant que son attribut (la couleur locale), déborde maintenant le contour, et le fait fluctuer et enfin s'effacer. Au lieu de contour, la couleur devient de plus en plus le moment constitutif central du tableau, mais, libérée de l'objet, elle a perdu la base objective et universelle pour l'articulation. Comme dit Merleau-Ponty, la couleur est, par sa nature, «une propriété de l'objet» et «n'est déterminée que si elle s'étale sur une certaine surface»⁵. Ainsi, si le contour s'efface, il serait très difficile de donner une structure distinctement articulée à la couleur. Lévi-Strauss parle de la nécessité du prétexte objectif et universel pour l'articulation de la qualité visuelle en même temps que de l'asservissement congénital des arts plastiques aux

⁴ *Ibid.*, S.292.

⁵ Maurice Merleau-Ponty: *Phénoménologie de la perception*, Librairie Gallimard, Paris, 1945, p. 10.

objets⁶. Libérer la couleur de l'objet et de plus réaliser l'articulation ayant la base objective et universelle, c'est sans doute très difficile: voici l'aporie et l'ironie de la peinture impressionniste.

Série de la «Cathédrale de Rouen» ou du «Nymphéa» de Monet. Dans ces tableaux, le contour ou la caractéristique de l'objet a la tendance de s'effacer presque complètement. Monet veut saisir peut-être la couleur en son apparence incessamment changeante, qui est, semble-t-il, retenue à peine sur le canvas par le continu en mosaïque des touches, qui n'ont pas par eux-mêmes aucune caractéristique objective et ne sont que des taches colorées, simples traces des mouvements de pinceau. Parce que la couleur s'apparaît ici de la mosaïque des taches colorées innombrables, il faut dire qu'elle est en elle-même la couleur apparente, dont le rôle est à retenir à son tour des couleurs changeantes apparaissant au sujet. Certes, il est possible d'y discerner des figures de Cathédrale ou de nymphéa, mais ces figures ne sont que ce qui s'apparaissent des couleurs, elles-mêmes apparaissantes. Celles-là sont, en ce sens, ce qui sont tissus par ces jeux de couleurs et se différent essentiellement de celles comme prétexte au sens de Lévi-Strauss: figures apparaissantes. Et voici le rôle important de la touche, qui préexiste aux couleurs et figures apparaissantes et les fait apparaître par sa mosaïque.

Parce que la couleur – la qualité sensible en général – n'existe pas en soi-même mais co-existe avec beaucoup d'autres qualités, et qu'elle est dans la matière et supportée par elle, faire ressortir la couleur (la qualité sensible) elle-même, cela signifie d'anéantir l'être concret de la matière et de la rendre transparente pour la couleur (la qualité sensible). C'est ainsi que la fonction de la touche devrait être saisie en double sens: rendre transparente la matière pour la couleur et faire fluctuer le contour d'objet, c'est-à-dire rendre opaque la matière pour l'objet.

Dans le cas de l'imitation objective idéale, les éléments subjectif et matériel doivent être transparents pour l'élément objectif: la matière ne doit pas y garder aucune trace du travail de peintre. Dans le cas de l'imitation subjective, le peintre cherche à rendre transparente la matière pour sa propre représentation, pourtant, il est possible que, sans aucune relation immédiate avec la représentation, l'état psychique très subtil de peintre laisse sa trace à la matière, que cette trace diminue la transparence pour la représentation. C'est cette trace qui est la touche.

Généralement parlant, la touche, en découpant la couleur de la relation objective, contribue à son indépendance en même temps que, comme

⁶ Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Mythologiques, Le cru et le cuit*, Librairie Plon, Paris, 1964, p. 27-28.

trace immédiate du mouvement corporel de peintre, dévoile un peu son intériorité ou son inconscient. Ici on peut parler de l'ambivalence de la touche.

Par exemple, en comparaison de quelques tableaux de Van Eyck ou de Rogier van der Weyden, dont la surface est complètement lisse et transparente comme celle de miroir, la surface des tableaux cités de Monet paraîtrait un peurugueuse et opaque. Dans le cas de ceux-là, la matière est complètement transparente pour l'objet et sa qualité sensible, tandis que, dans le cas de ceux-ci, des touches assez grosses dévoilent un peu la caractéristique physique de la couleur à l'huile, c'est-à-dire la matérialité de la matière. Rendant ainsi la surface opaque, la touche fait obstacle à l'indépendance de la qualité sensible aussi bien qu'au dévoilement de l'intériorité. La touche est ambiguë ou contradictoire à soi-même et c'est bien par cela qu'elle dévoile l'ambivalence de la matière.

D'après Nicolai Hartmann, l'œuvre d'art – l'esprit objectivé en général – gagne la durée permanente à cause qu'il est produit de la matière (die Materie), «un moyen réel qui dure (ein dauerhaftes reales Medium)»⁷. La matière est regardée ici comme la base ontique de l'œuvre d'art. Mais, en même temps, il regarde la matière comme le «principe de la division du domaine (das Gebietsanweisende Prinzip)»; est-il vraiment possible que les genres artistiques soient divisés selon des matières au sens de Hartmann? Il est indéniable qu'il y ait un peu de l'équivoque dans le concept de la matière chez N. Hartmann, mais ce n'est pas le problème à discuter ici. Or, Etienne Souriau suppose quatre modes de l'existence de l'œuvre d'art: physique, phénoménale, réique ou chosale et transcendante. C'est l'existence phénoménale (les qualités sensibles) qui se rapporte à la division de grands genres artistiques, dont les sous-genres sont définis par la relation avec l'existence réique. Certes, la qualité sensible ne peut pas être comme telle sans le support de l'existence physique, mais il est aussi certain que ce qui est la base de la structure de l'œuvre d'art et définit sa caractéristique n'est pas la matière mais la qualité sensible, qui apparaît par le contact de la conscience du récepteur et de la matière formée. Ainsi la matière de l'œuvre d'art devrait être pris en deux sens: physique ou au sens de Hartmann et phénoménal ou au sens de Souriau. Celle au sens physique est la base de l'être de l'œuvre d'art, celle au sens phénoménal de sa structure.

La touche de Monet est, en un sens, le signe de la crise de la peinture moderne, parce que, en faisant fluctuer le contour, elle a exposé la perspective au danger de mort, laquelle était longtemps la base constructive du ta-

⁷ Nicolai Hartmann, *Aesthetik*, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin, 1953, S.83 u. a.

bleau, tandis que, en dévoilant la matérialité de la matière, elle a rendu la surface de tableau toute opaque pour l'objet aussi bien que pour la représentation. Le plus important est qu'elle a mis en question la matière, le troisième élément de l'imitation, presque négligée longtemps. Et, après cette crise, l'artiste a été obligé de prendre n'importe quelle attitude pour la question ainsi posée. Le cheminement de la peinture après la crise, lequel est contenu déjà, comme germe et à l'état chaotique, dans des œuvres de derniers jours de Monet, serait abrégé comme suit.

Premier chemin est de rendre manifeste le moment matériel. Il se diviserait lui-même en deux suivant deux sens de la matière: l'un est de rendre manifeste la qualité visuelle en elle-même, le sens de l'art abstrait – ce chemin se diviserait aussi à l'infini suivant des modes de recherche du prétexte de l'articulation visuelle en remplacement de l'objet –, l'autre, rendre manifeste la matérialité (le caractère physique) de la matière – dans ce chemin, la déconstruction de l'art moderne se poursuivrait le plus radicalement; par exemple, le sens de dadaïsme ou d'objet. Le deuxième est de rendre manifeste le moment subjectif – dans ce chemin, la relation avec la corporéité serait soulignée et la subjectivité moderne serait radicalement critiquée. Le troisième est de rendre manifeste le moment objectif – ce chemin ne serait pas le retour à l'imitation objective mentionnée ci-dessus mais la recherche de l'objectivité toute nouvelle. Ces chemins s'entrecroisent les uns et les autres et forment une relation très complexe. Il serait nécessaire de la décrire en détail en mettant la base sur la situation actuelle artistique, mais ce ne serait pas ici qu'il faille tenter cette discription.

Der russische Symbolismus erreichte um 1910 seinen Höhepunkt und hatte zwei Richtungen, die wir bei vielen seinen Vertretern eng miteinander verflochten finden: 1. Symbolismus als *Kunstrichtung* und 2. Symbolismus als *Weltbild*, als eine Weltanschauung, eine bestimmte Lebensphilosophie. Diese Verflechtung läßt sich bei Vjaceslav Ivanov und Andrej Belyj besonders deutlich erkennen, obwohl die zweite bei beiden oft überwiegt. Das ist für den russischen Symbolismus im allgemeinen kennzeichnend.

Die wahre Kunst sei immer symbolisch – so lautete die wichtigste Entdeckung, die vom Symbolismus gemacht wurde. Andrej Belyj sah den Sinn des Symbolismus als einer ästhetischen Theorie darin, daß die Symbolisten »begriffen hatten, daß die Kunst durch und durch symbolisch ist«.¹ Dabei war das Symbol für die Symbolisten ein polysemisches Phänomen, ein vermittelndes Element zwischen der materiellen, sinnlich empfindbaren Welt und der Welt des Geistes, der Noetik. Für Vjaceslav Ivanov waren die Symbole keine menschliche Erfindung, sondern eine von Gott ausgehende Emanation, eine Ausstrahlung, die von oben her niederkommt (also ihrer Herkunft nach göttlich!); sie seien Zeichen, die Einiges von der göttlichen Wirklichkeit erkennen lassen. Sie führen ihr selbständiges Dasein und haben viele Bedeutungen, die auf verschiedenen Ebenen des Seins und des Bewußtseins entsprechend unterschiedlich sind. »Jedes wahre Symbol – so Ivanov – ist eine Verkörperung der lebendigen Wahrheit Gottes«, also eine *Realität*, ein »wirkliches Leben«, das aber nur »relativ existiert« und im Verhältnis zu anderen Daseinsebenen nur »relativ ontologisch« (im Verhältnis zu den niedrigeren Ebenen) oder »meonisch« (d.h. »nicht-seiend« im Verhältnis zu den höheren) ist. Das Symbol sei eine Mittelgestalt ohne konkreten Inhalt, sie diene zur Vermittlung jener Realität, die »bald erglimmt, bald wieder erlischt, ein Medium für durchströmende Erscheinungen Gottes« (II, 646-647).²

¹ Andrej Belyj's Werke werden nach folgenden Quellen zitiert: 1. *Belyj, A. Kritika. Estetika. Teorija Simvolizma*. Bd. 1. Moskau, 1994; 2. *ibid.*, Bd. 2; 3. *Belyj, A. Simvolizm kak miroponimanije*. M., 1994.

² Die Texte von Vjaceslav Ivanov werden zitiert nach: *Ivanov, Vjac. Sobranije socinenij*. Brüssel, 1974. In Klammern werden der Band und die Seite genannt.

Für Andrej Belyj ist das Symbol eine Hülle, die ihr Inneres verschleiert und vor profaner Eindringung schützt. Das Geheimnis wird nur jenen eröffnet, die es verstehen können. Das Symbol sei »ein Fenster zur Ewigkeit« (2, 212) und ein Weg zu *dem Symbol* (mit dem bestimmten Artikel), unter welchem Belyj die absolute geistige Realität versteht: En, Christus, Sophia oder Gott überhaupt. Der Symbolismus wird von ihm daher als ein spezifisch geistiges System konzipiert, das weit über der Gnoseologie und der Ontologie steht und die Entdeckungen beider auf der ästhetischen Ebene synthetisiert.

Diese Symbolkonzeption Belyjs setzt in vieler Hinsicht, wenn auch unbewußt, die Tradition der Kirchenväter von Alexandria und Kappadozien fort, wo schon in der Spätantike ein umfassendes System des Symbolismus entwickelt wurde, das auf dem von Klemens von Alexandria formulierten Prinzip basierte: »verschleiern und entschleiern«.³

Der Symbolismus als Begriff war für seine Theoretiker mehrdeutig. Das war *die Theorie* der symbolischen Selbstäußerung der Welt des Geistes durch die Kunst, *der Weg* in diese Welt des Geistes, im Endeffekt also zu »dem Symbol« selbst, und eine besondere Art des *Seins* zwischen der materiellen und der geistigen Welt.

Laut Ellis (L. Kobylinskij) habe der Symbolismus die Methode der »kontemplativen Komprehenz« vollkommen beherrscht sowie auch gelernt, »diese Durst nach dem letzten Geheimnis, diese Sucht nach Grenzenlosem bis ins Höchste zu treiben« (194).⁴ Die symbolische Leiter der Erkenntnis Stufe für Stufe besteigend, entwickelt der symbolisierende Geist in sich »unvermeidlich das Streben nach Erkenntnis desjenigen Großen Symbols, das sozusagen das Symbol aller Symbole ist, das sie alle miteinander verbindet und voneinander löst, sie vorbedingt und verursacht. Das Große Symbol hält sie zusammen und bedingt damit auf eine geheime Art und Weise auch sich selbst vor. Jeder Symbolist kennt diese inbrünstige Sehnsucht nach dem Ursymbol; sein leichtes Glimmern ist wahrscheinlich gerade das Leitmotiv zum Aufbau aller anderen Symbole« (194).

Die Geschichte der geistigen Kultur im christlichen Raum »kommt wieder herum an den Ort, da sie anfang«. Nach Jahrhunderten der Säkularisierung und der Mode für Naturwissenschaften, Positivismus und Materialismus kommt die Kultur – diesmal in ihrem säkularisierten Teil (weltliche Kultur) – im 20. Jh., am Beginn des Aufschwungs supertechnologischer

³ Mehr vom Symbolismus der Kirchenväter und Byzanz s.: Bychkov, V. AESTHETICA PATRUM. Bd. 1, S. 241-243; Bychkov, V. Malaja istorija vizantijskoj estetiki. S. 80-92.

⁴ Ellis wird (mit der Angabe der Seiten) nach folgender Ausgabe zitiert: Ellis. Russkije simvolisty: Konstantin Balmont, Valerij Brjusov, Andrej Belyj. Tomsk, 1996.

Zivilisationsprozesse, zur Notwendigkeit eines absoluten Urgrundes des Daseins, eines geistigen Ur-Antriebs der Welt, kurz gesagt zur Notwendigkeit des alten guten Gottes zurück, der in der Sprache der neuen künstlerischen Reflexie Ursymbol, Großes Symbol oder einfach das Symbol genannt wird. Das ändert nichts an seinem geistigen Inneren. Der Symbolismus tendierte – in Person seiner führenden Vertreter im Westen wie in Rußland – zurück zur traditionellen Geistigkeit, wenn auch etwas modernisiert im Sinne der neuen Zeit.

Der Symbolismus stellte, so Belyj, eine mehrdimensionale, polyphänomenale Welt des geistigen und materiellen Daseins des Menschen als eine Grenzsituation zwischen dem Wesen und seiner Erscheinung, zwischen Leben und Tod, zwischen Vergangenheit und Zukunft dar. Das Moderne, d.h. das Symbolische – also vor allem die Kunst als Quintessenz des Symbolismus – »eröffnet sich der Zukunft entgegen, die sich tief in uns selbst verbirgt; wir lauschen nach Lebenszeichen des neuen Menschen in uns – und wir lauschen nach Tod und Verfall; wir sind tot, und das alte Leben verfällt an uns – und wir sind noch ungeboren, unsere Seele ist zukunftssträchtig, *décadence* und *renaissance* kämpfen noch in ihr gegeneinander« (2, 222). Für Bely ist der Symbolismus die einzig mögliche Lebens- und Denkweise am Grenzpunkt zwischen Leben und Tod der Kultur und der Menschheit selbst. Daraus folgt auch der Inhalt der neuen Kunstsymbole: entweder das Licht, »der endgültige Sieg der wieder auflebenden Menschheit, oder die hoffnungslose Finsternis, Verfall, Tod« (2, 222). So erkannte Belyj schon am Anfang des 20. Jh. das Wesentlichste im geistig-künstlerischen Mythologem dieses letzten Jahrhunderts unseres Jahrtausends, und er gab ihm diesen allumfassenden Namen: Symbolismus.

Die russischen Symbolisten spürten diese innere Widersprüchlichkeit des Symbolismus, als er noch in seiner Blütezeit war; sie sprachen sogar von seiner Krise und sahen darin ein Abbild der allgemeinen Krise der Kultur. Für Ellis bedeutete diese Krise jedoch beiweitem noch keine »Agonie und Tod« des Symbolismus, wie es damals viele Kritiker behaupteten. Das wäre dann »der Tod aller Kultur und das Ende jeglichen Ideenlebens, was undenkbar ist« (279).⁵ Auch der Ausweg aus dieser Krise wurde von den Sym-

⁵ Was einem russischen Symbolisten am Anfang des Jahrhunderts »undenkbar« erschien, sieht am Ende dieses Jahrhunderts durchaus real aus. Die moderne POST-Kultur bietet ein unverkennbares Vorzeichen davon, wenn nicht die Tatsache selbst. (Mehr über die POST-Kultur s.: *Bychkov, V. Iskusstvo nasego stoletija*. In: Kornevisce. *Kniga neklassiceskoj estetiki*. M., 1998. S. 111-186; *Bychkov, V. The art of our century*. In: KorneviSHChe. *A Book of Non-Classical Aesthetics*. Moscow, 1998. P. 49-164; 194-198.

bolisten selbst gefunden, z.B. von Brjusov als Vertreter des »klassischen« (d.h. rein künstlerischen) Symbolismus in seinem Artikel von 1905 (»Das heilige Opfer«) oder von Belyj in mehreren seinen Schriften. Der Ausweg sei: *der Ausbruch der Kunst über ihre Grenzen hinaus in das Leben selbst*. Der Symbolismus soll sich nicht nur als eine literarische »Schule«, sondern vor allem als »Dienst« für die Menschheit auf ihrem Wege zu höheren Ebenen der geistigen Kultur und des Daseins im Ganzen verstehen – so lautete das *Credo* des Symbolismus, das ihm von seinen Autoren schon 1904-05 verschrieben und zum Teil (bes. von Andrej Belyj) auch realisiert wurde.

V. Ivanov hielt zwei Arten von Symbolismus auseinander: den *realistischen* Symbolismus, der für ihn wesentliche (*reale*), zeitlose Grundlagen von Dingen und Erscheinungen repräsentierte, und den *idealistischen*, der nur die ästhetisierenden Fantasierereien des Künstlers verkörperte, der sich für die Wesentlichkeiten des Daseins gar nicht interessiert. Der idealistische Symbolismus, d.h. jener, der damals gerade in Westeuropa dominierte und von den russischen Symbolisten zum Teil übernommen wurde, führe – so Ivanov – zum »großen weltweiten Idealismus«. Darunter sei der immer zunehmende Individualismus, der Subjektivismus und die Entfremdung der Menschen voneinander, ihr Auseinanderleben als Resultat der »Ablehnung allgemeingültiger Realnormen des Mitdenkens und Mitfühlens« zu verstehen (553).

Jetzt, am Ende des 20. Jh., erkennen wir die Ergebnisse solcher Entwicklung der humanitären Kultur und die Verwirklichung vieler Mahnungen Ivanovs besonders deutlich. Die humanitäre Kultur und die sich damit auseinandersetzenden Wissenschaften verwandeln sich in unserer Zeit in vieler Hinsicht in ein (konventionelles) »Glasperlenspiel«, das auf ästhetischen Spielregeln basiert, welche ihrerseits von einer oder anderen Gruppe von Getreuen willkürlich festgelegt werden. Da heute aber sogut wie jeder eigene Spielregeln einführen darf, zerfällt die Gemeinschaft der Künstler und Intellektuellen in unzählige fast hermetisch verschlossene Gruppen und Grüppchen, die die »Spielsprachen« der anderen kaum verstehen und eigentlich nicht verstehen wollen. So weit hat sich also jene Kraft heute entwickelt, die von Ivanov als »idealistischer Symbolismus« bezeichnet wurde.

Für russische Symbolisten hatte nur der realistische Symbolismus eine historische Perspektive. Ivanov sah in ihm nicht eine Spielerei des ästhetisierenden Bewußtseins, sondern ein bewußtes Streben nach der »objektiven Wahrheit des Seins«, und diese Wahrheit liege für ihn im *Mythos*, der eine höhere Form der Realität als die sinnlich wahrnehmbare Wirklichkeit darstelle (554).

Für Andrej Belyj bestand »das Neue« der symbolischen Kunst in der »überwiegenden Präsenz des Alten«, d.h. der antiken und mittelalterlichen Mystik des Orients sowie auch des Abendlandes in ihr (1, 55; 142-143). Alles Vergangene sei in die moderne Kunst mit eingegliedert, meint Belyj. »...Wir erleben jetzt in der Kunst alle Epochen und alle Nationen wieder; das vergangene Leben saust vor unseren Augen. Das ist so, weil wir an der Schwelle einer großen Zukunft stehen« (1, 143). Dieser Pathos der »großen Zukunft«,⁶ den wir auch bei anderen Symbolisten sowie bei vielen Vertretern der russischen Avantgarde und der »religiösen Renaissance« der Jahrhundertwende erkennen, ergab sich aus jener geistig-religiösen Ausrichtung der Kultur und Kunst, die damals wiederentdeckt und in vieler Hinsicht neu konzipiert wurde. Kurz vor Beginn der stürmischen Welle des antireligiösen wissenschaftlich-technischen Fortschritts und des allumfassenden Konsumterrors des 20. Jh. sahen viele Vertreter des »silbernen Jahrhunderts« (Belyj, Kandinskij, Florenskij waren darin einig) neue Perspektiven der geistigen Kultur vorwiegend in einer neuen Vereinigung von Kunst und Religion (ob traditionell oder neu konzipiert, spielt ggf. keine Rolle).

Der Postmodernismus, der in der europäischen und amerikanischen Kultur der zweiten Hälfte des 20. Jh. dominiert, kann hier stolz vermerken (und tut das oft auch), daß sich alle Kulturen und Künste der Vergangenheit in ihm vereinigt, vermischt und verflochten haben, und zwar in einem höheren Maße und mit viel größerer Freiheit und Fantasie als im Symbolismus (natürlich). Der Pathos des künftigen geistigen Wiederauflebens der

⁶ Man soll jedoch nicht vergessen, daß sich dieser »Pathos« bei Belyj aus seinem anhaltenden Gefühl einer globalen Krise (einer Umwendung) der Kultur, des Weltbildes, des Bewußtseins und des menschlichen Lebens überhaupt entwickelte, was sich in seinen apokalyptischen Prophezeiungen und Stimmungen, bes. in der Zeit des 1. Weltkrieges, deutlich erkennen läßt (s. seine vier »Krisen« – »Die Krise des Lebens«, »Die Krise des Denkens«, »Die Krise der Kultur« und die etwas später geschriebene »Krise des Bewußtseins«). J. Niva sieht den Kern und das Haupträtsel des gesamten Schaffens von Andrej Belyj überhaupt in seiner »apokalyptischen Weltauffassung« (Istorija russkoj literatury. XX vek. Serebrjanyj vek. S. 110). In seinen »Aufzeichnungen eines Sonderlings« erzählt Belyj z.B. die apokalyptische Vision, die er in seiner Jugend in einer Kirche zu Ostern erlebt und später im anthroposophischen Sinne symbolisch interpretiert hat: »Als ob die Kirche mit einer Wand ins *Nichts* fiel; ich sah das *Ende* (meines Lebens oder der Welt? – weiß ich nicht), als ob der Weg der Geschichte mit zwei Kuppeln endete: eine Kirche – und die Menschenmassen, die dahinströmten; als ob Abgeordnete der ganzen Menschheit, in Glanz und Bysson gekleidet, dehnten sich aus, durch Klang und Farben, ins alles beendende *Nichts*« (Belyj, A. Zapiski cudaka. Bd. 1. Berlin, 1922, S. 96). Mehr über die Apokalyptik im Belyj's Symbolismus s. Cioran, S. The apocalyptic symbolism of Andrej Belyj. The Hague, 1973.

Kultur, den wir bei Symbolisten erkennen, wurde im Postmodernismus jedoch mit einer alles zermürbenden Ironie oder einem bewußt zukunftsindifferenten Herumspielen des ästhetisierenden Bewußtseins mit allen Formen der früheren Kulturen und Künste ersetzt. Das Jahrhundert ist (wie auch die ganze Kultur) alt geworden und hat die Träume und Hoffnungen seiner Jugend gelassen.

Eine besondere Aufmerksamkeit genossen bei Symbolisten verbale Symbole, die als Träger der Energie der von ihnen symbolisierten Archetypen verstanden wurden. Viele große russische Symbolisten waren da einer Meinung. Sie wandten sich an alte Zaubersprüche und magische Formeln, um die sakrale Magie des Symbols (vor allem des verbalen Symbols) in ihrem Schaffen wieder zu beleben. A. Belyj ist überzeugt, daß das Aussprechen des Namens eines Gegenstandes seine ontologische Realität, sein Dasein bestätigt. Das erfordert eine besondere Sensibilität gegenüber dem sprachlichen Element des Verbalsymbols und zu den Neologismen. Belyj wiederholt seine Gedanken über die magische Kraft des Wortes, über das Wort als »Beschwörung der Dinge«, als »Evokation Gottes« mehrere Male, um uns seine reale Vorstellung von der starken Energie des Wortes zu vermitteln: sie läßt sich nicht verbalisieren, bezaubert aber jeden Lyriker und überhaupt jeden, wer die Gabe der poetischen Empfindung der Welt besitzt.

Im gleichen Sinne sei auch Belyj's Worte zu verstehen, daß »das Ziel der Poesie die Erschaffung der Sprache« sei; »die Sprache ist das Schaffen der Lebensverhältnisse selbst«, d.h. ein Durchbruch durch den Rahmen der Kunst als solchen in den Bereich des realen Lebens, ein Ausbruch über die Grenzen der reinen Ästhetik hinaus – davon ist Belyj fest überzeugt. In diesem Falle wird sogar ein »ziellooses Spiel mit den Wörtern« sinnvoll: »die Vereinigung von Wörtern unabhängig von ihrem logischen Sinn miteinander ist das Mittel, mit dem sich der Mensch vor dem Drang des Unbekannten schützt« (1, 234). Belyj äußert damit einen für die damalige Zeit eher erstaunlichen, aber trotzdem prophetischen (sogar hellseherischen) Gedanken, in dem das Credo der im 20. Jh. praktisch dominant gewordenen Richtung der künstlerischen Kultur formuliert wird. Schon ein paar Jahre später findet dieses Prinzip in Rußland (von Belyj's Konzeption zwar fast unabhängig) eine aktive Verwendung in der Literatur, und sehr bald erreicht es seinen logischen Maximum in der Paradoxie von Krucenych, Burljuk, Chlebnikov und anderen Futuristen (in ihrer skandalös berühmten »zaum« – »Klügelei«)⁷; erst in den 30-er Jahren wird dies alles zwangsläufig unter-

⁷ Das klassisch gewordene Vers »Dyr bul scyr« von Krucenych wurde Ende 1912 aus völlig »unbekannten« Wörtern zusammengestellt. Mehr vom Einfluß A. Belyjs auf die Experimente russischer Dichter im 1. Drittel unseres Jahrhunderts siehe u.a. den

bunden. D. Charms und die OBERIUtten waren die letzten in dieser Reihe.⁸ Im Westen wurden solche Praktiken von Dadaisten und Surrealisten aktiv erprobt, und später wurden sie von der Literatur des »Bewußtseinsstroms« und vom »absurden Theater« weiter getragen. Andrej Belyj hat dieses globale Prinzip der modernen Kunst als einer der ersten formuliert – und als einer der ersten zu verwenden begonnen, zuerst mit Vorsicht, in seinem Schaffen in den ersten Jahren des 20. Jh. Kein Zufall, daß moderne Literaturtheoretiker ihn als einen »Vater des Futurismus«⁹ und Vorläufer des »modernistischen« Romans bezeichnen, in einer Reihe mit James Joyce.¹⁰

In seiner Spätzeit versuchte Belyj das Symbol sogar als die *dritte*, in-die-Tiefe-gehende Dimension des *Dogmas* (im allgemeinen und nicht nur im religiösen Sinne) im Geiste des anthroposophischen Astralgeometrismus zu konzipieren:¹¹ »...im Symbol ist das Dogma kein Kreis, sondern ein aus der Spiralbewegung entstehender Drehkegel; die Evolutionslinie wird in diesem Kegel des *Dogmasymbols* mit der Kreisebene und den in sie eingeschriebenen Figuren gebildet, die von einem einzigen, als erster vorgegebenen Punkt ausgeht und immer höher steigt... Alle Punkte aller Linien dieser Kreise und Ebenen strömen mit der Zeit und schwellen langsam an; in der ursprünglichen Spitze des Kegels ist der Augenblick der Ewigkeit konzentriert; das Licht erfüllt den ganzen Kegel – und jagt, und plagt das Dogma in seiner Drehbewegung, und das Dogma flieht, und zieht, und eröffnet sich in den Inkarnationen der Zeit. Der Symbolismus ist die Tiefe des Dogmatismus und das Wachstum der dogmatischen Wahrheiten« (3, 292). Diese exstatische Theorie des russischen Anhängers der Anthroposophie, der sich erst von einer meditativen Trance erholt hat, sieht wie eine sinnlose magische Formel aus (obwohl sie logisch durchdacht und mit einer graphischen Zeichnung belegt ist), enthält aber jene wunderbare Magie der Worte (seine poetische Glossolalie), die Belyj als Theoretiker so oft propagierte und als Praktiker sehr gut beherrschte. Ihre scheinbare Sinnlosigkeit beinhaltet in

interessanten Artikel: *Ivanov, Viac. Vs. O vozdejstvii »esteticeskogo eksperimenta« Andreja Belogo* (V. Chlebnikov, V. Majakovskij, M. Cvetajeva, B. Pasternak) in: Andrej Belyj. *Problemy tvorcestva. Stat'ji. Vospominanija. Publikacii*. M., 1988, S. 338-366.

⁸ Genauer davon s. bei: *Jacquard, J.-F. Daniil Charms i konec russkogo avangarda*. St. Pb., 1995.

⁹ S.: *Chizhevskii, D. Anfänge des russischen Futurismus*. Wiesbaden, 1963, S. 9.

¹⁰ Mehr davon: *Woronzoff, Al. Andrej Belyj's »Peterburg«, James Joyce's »Ulysses« and the Symbolist movement*. Bern, 1982; *Weber R. Der moderne Roman: Proust, Joyce, Belyj, Woolf und Faulkner*. Bonn, 1981.

¹¹ Vgl. die Versuche R. Steiners, die Urbilder der Kunst als geometrisierte geistige Konstruktionen zu beschreiben (seine Vorlesung zum »Wesen der Künste«, u. a. in: *Steiner, R. Iz oblasti duchovnogogo znanija, oder antroposofii*. M., 1997, S. 336 ff.).

Wirklichkeit den Schlüssel zu der großen Welt der Kunst der geometrischen Abstraktionen, die bei der russischen (sowie auch von der westlichen) Avantgarde als Kubismus, Futurismus, Kubofuturismus, Suprematismus, Strahlenkunst, Kinetismus usw. ihren Ausdruck fand. Ob sich Belyj dessen selbst bewußt war, ist heute schwer zu sagen; wir finden in solchen seinen Theorien-Formeln jedoch jene tiefen Grundlagen, auf welchen viele Avantgardisten am Anfang des 20. Jh. ihr praktisches künstlerisches Schaffen aufbauten.

Zu einer spezifisch russischen Besonderheit des Symbolismus wurde die Theorie der Theourgie als Grundprinzip der zukünftigen Kunst. Der Begriff *Theourgie* (griech. theourgia – göttliches Werk, sakraler Ritus, ein Mysterium) hatte im Altertum den Sinn eines sakral-mysteriellen Verkehrs mit der Welt der Götter im Prozeß bestimmter Ritualhandlungen. V. Solovjov verstand die Theourgie als eine uralte »substantielle Einheit des von der Mystik begeisterten Schaffens«, und ihr Sinn bestand für ihn in der Vereinigung des Irdischen und des Himmlischen im Akt des sakralen Schaffens. Eine besondere Bedeutung maß er der künftigen Entwicklungsetappe der Theourgie bei, die er als »freie Theourgie« oder »integres Schaffen« bezeichnete. Das Wesentlichste dieser Etappe lag für ihn in einer bewußten mystischen »Kommunikation mit der höheren Welt durch das innere Schaffen« auf der Grundlage einer organischen Einheit der wichtigsten Bestandteile des Schaffens überhaupt, d.h. der Mystik, der »schönen Künste« und des »technischen Wirkens«. Diese Vorstellung von der Theourgie fand bei Symbolisten sowie auch bei den meisten religiösen Denkern Anfang des 20. Jh. in Rußland einen aktiven Widerhall.

V. Ivanov verwies ganz besonders auf den Gedanken von V. Solovjov, daß die Kunst der Zukunft eine neue freie Beziehung zur Religion herstellen soll. »Die Lyriker und die Maler«, schrieb er, »sollen wieder Priester und Propheten werden, nur aber in einem wichtigeren, im erhabeneren Sinne: sie sollen nicht nur von der religiösen Idee beherrscht sein, sondern auch selbst diese Idee beherrschen und ihre irdischen Verkörperungen bewußt lenken«. Gerade solche Künstler werden von Ivanov *Theourgen*, Träger der göttlichen Offenbarung genannt. Sie seien die wahren Mythosmacher, die Symbolisten im höchsten Sinne des Wortes.

Auch Andrej Belyj schenkte der Theourgie als höchste Etappe des Schaffens, als Erschaffung des Lebens mit Hilfe der göttlichen Energie der Sophia und des Ursymbols eine große Aufmerksamkeit. Bis zu seinem Lebensende blieb er seinem künstlerischen und menschlichen Credo treu: *Der Symbolismus habe den Sinn der menschlichen Geschichte und Kultur als theologische Streben nach Verkörperung des transzendenten Symbols im realen Leben eröffnet.*

Eine sehr klare und deutliche Definition der Theourgie finden wir bei dem russischen Philosophen Nikolaj Berdjajev in seinem Buch »Der Sinn des Schaffens: Versuch einer Rechtfertigung des Menschen« (1912): »Die Theourgie schafft nicht die Kultur, sondern ein neues Dasein, die Theourgie ist über jegliche Kultur erhaben. Die Theourgie ist eine Kunst, die einer anderen Welt, einem anderen Sein, einem anderen Leben und Schönheit eine Existenz verleiht. Die Theourgie überwindet die Tragödie des Schaffens und zielt die schöpferische Energie auf ein neues Leben auf.« Jegliche traditionelle Kunst und Literatur, jede Teilung des Schaffens findet in der Theourgie ihr Ende; mit ihr endet die traditionelle Kultur als Menschenwerk und beginnt die »Superkultur«, weil die Theourgie ein »Zusammenwirken von Mensch und Gott« sei, also »ein göttliches Schaffen, ein gottmenschliches Werk«. Viele russischen Symbolisten sahen den Sinn des Symbolismus und sein Endziel – die Theourgie – gerade *darin*.

Das 20. Jh. gab uns bisher, wie es scheint, noch keinen unzweideutigen Beweis, daß die Symbolisten und die russischen Religionsphilosophen recht hatten. Es wäre m.E. aber viel zu früh, ihre Prophezeihungen und Hoffnungen zu vergessen. Die Krise der Kultur, die so viele Vertreter des »silbernen Jahrhunderts« der russischen Kultur ganz deutlich gespürt hatten, ging tiefer und weiter, als es sich die optimistischsten unter ihnen hatten vorstellen können. Laßt uns jedoch hoffen, daß sie ein *Übergang* und kein *Untergang* ist.

Jožef Muhovič
Art ↔ Aesthetics ↔ Philosophy

I. Introduction

The issue discussed in this contribution is the *logic* of relations between art, aesthetics and philosophy in their practical, everyday interactions, which is, in my opinion, a topical question for two reasons at least. *First*, because the postmodern era, oscillating between the cult of the radical distinction between phenomena and the opposing cult of their pragmatic (con)fusion, is itself calling out for an appropriate answer. And *second*, as an individual engaged in art theory and practice, I am interested in the logical conditions under which art, aesthetics and philosophy can – if at all – mutually support and inspire one another in establishing the most direct contact with reality, which is their »subject«, without losing their autonomy.¹

II. Exposition: Mini-definitions

A fundamental step in studying relations is the identification and definition of their constitutive elements. And this is already the first crucial problem encountered in exploring the relations between art, aesthetics and philosophy. It is generally known that, because of their nature and complexity, a single and ultimate definition of these fields is not possible. But if I am to proceed, I have no other choice but to risk some *elementary* defini-

¹ It is certain that by far the most competent individual for enlightening the issue discussed would be someone who is equally talented, educated and creative in all three fields, i.e. in the arts, philosophy and aesthetics, in the deepest sense of these words. Despite having studied all three fields, I do not feel entirely qualified to fulfil this criterion, as I am creatively active *only* in the fine arts. And so, in attempting to explore the logic of relations between art, aesthetics and philosophy, I have consciously or unconsciously resorted to certain professional apriorisms and thus my view of the problem will most likely appear biased. Nevertheless, there are two reasons why I dare to present my personal conclusions to the public. The first is that I shall explicitly support my findings, allowing others to verify them at all times. And second, I consider a public presentation to be the best opportunity to have my views made more complex or rejected, with arguments, of course.

tions of these three fields. In spite of all the dangers involved. In order to capture the phenomenon as a whole and present its essence in a few words or sentences, it will be necessary to make reductions, simplifications and arbitrary syntheses, all of which can easily lead to vague, incomplete or oversimplified results.

Nevertheless, I dare to ask (myself): What are the elementary characteristics of the phenomena designated by the terms »art«, »aesthetics« and »philosophy«?

1. Art

If one disregards all the particularities – stemming from means of expression, technical procedures and ways of thinking – which make artistic phenomena and fields distinguishable, one may draw two maximally generalized conclusions: (a) art is the articulation and activation of thoughts and emotions with the mediation of sensual equivalents adapted to them, and (b) works of art are systems of organized sensations (*A. A. Moles*) provoking symbolic reactions when experienced. Both generalizations show art as a special »form of operating with experience« (*L. A. White*), whose goal is to make experience intelligible *simultaneously* on the sensual, emotional and spiritual levels, and thus help man to holistically adapt to his environment. However, there are two preconditions for such operating with experience: (i) practical sensual cognition, and (ii) effective »communication« between sensual recognizability and conceptional abstraction.

(i) In art, the creation of forms to represent the artist's experience and touch the thoughts and emotions of the public is always an act based on sensations. Yet this act cannot be realized without a knowledge of the principles on which the production and organization of sensations employed by a specific branch of art is based. For this reason, a work of art is always the result of the level of knowledge of such principles and the effectiveness of their application in practice. Its contents are not only the contents of the artist's thoughts and emotions, but also sensual cognition itself. One may therefore say that art is the expression of *thoughts and emotions by means of sensual cognition*, and that this fact is the basic element for its definition.

(ii) If one of the determining characteristics of art is expressing spiritual contents through mediation of the sensual, it is also evident that such expression can only function if art disposes with the means and methods enabling the effective »translation« of the sensual into the spiritual and vice-versa. Practice has shown that art masters such translation superbly. Even more: its artefacts are nothing short of exemplary and inspirational

prototypes of the translation of the empirical into the conceptual and ideas into reality.

In addition to the characteristics stemming from the reflections made, artistic phenomena have many other characteristics and aspects which will not be considered here. But since the articulated characteristics should not, in my opinion, be missing in any phenomenologically consistent description of the *differentia specifica* of art, I shall take the liberty to make the following mini-definition: art is the expression of thoughts and emotions by means of sensual cognition; the operational form of such expression is the development of spiritual contents into an artistic form with the purpose of articulating human experience in a poetical way, simultaneously adapted to the sensual, emotional and intellectual abilities of man.

2. Aesthetics

It is generally known that aesthetics was born as a philosophical discipline in the mid 18th century from the desire of systematic philosophy to cover one of the great white blurs on the map of its reflections – the sphere of the sensual. A. G. Baumgarten introduced this discipline as a philosophical theory of sensual cognition (*scientia cognitionis sensitivae*), considering it to be, together with logic, an essential propedeutic discipline of theoretical and practical philosophy.² His fundamental idea, inspired by the enlightenment, was that conceptional and sensual cognition are two separate and independent areas governed by their own unique principles and rules, and thus must be treated equally by philosophy. He developed his aesthetics in order to study, in a philosophical way, the sensual so ignored in the past, and use it to explore the immanent laws of the sensual in a similar way as logic reveals the laws of thought. The fundamental concept of Baumgarten's analyses of the sensual is »beauty« as the representative of the most perfect form and highest level of sensual cognition. And because it is generally believed that, in art, beauty appears in the most purified and perfect forms, for Baumgarten this meant that his aesthetics, as the »fundamental analysis of the beautiful«, is *eo ipso* also the theory of art.

Hence, Baumgarten's aesthetics is, at its core, »dualistic«. On one side it is a philosophical theory of the sensual and sensual cognition, and on the other a philosophical theory of the beautiful and of art as an activity of creating beauty. The subsequent development of aesthetics grasped both concepts, continuing to develop them always in close connection with current philosophical debates.

² Cf. Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, Frankfurt a. d. Oder, 1750, § 1–3 (reprint lat./ger. Hildesheim 1961).

My mini-definition: aesthetics is a philosophical theory of sensual cognition in the broadest sense of the word, and considering the fact that art is »expressing through sensual cognition«, also a philosophical theory of art, or, more precisely, a theory of the philosophical aspects of art. Bound by its subject to the sensual, and by its methodology to the high conceptual abstraction of philosophy, aesthetics operates at the intersection of the spheres of interest of two key human cognitive abilities: perception and thought. This location allows it to study their interactions »on its own skin« and treat them »from the inside«.

3. Philosophy

The problem of defining philosophy lies in its nature, in the fact that it is not possible to once for all define neither its subject (as the subject of philosophizing may literally become everything that exists) nor its universal methodology (as each new approach to philosophizing is *ipso facto* an invention of a new methodology).³

Philosophical speculation begins with the notion of »being« (*Sein*) and its strong distinction from the notion of »the existent« (*Seiendes*). Only when an awareness of the unity or oneness of being awakes in connection with a multitude of the existing does a specifically philosophical way of thinking about the world occur. But this thinking continues to remain linked to the sphere of the existing for a considerable time. The beginning, origin and foundation of the being is sought in the sphere of the existing. For philosophy, the particular must not remain particular, but should be included as a functional part in a certain whole, in a certain universal form of law and order.

Therefore, the fundamental philosophical question is how to identify and articulate in notions the being and essence of the existing. Since, contrary to existence, being and essence do not present themselves directly, and because the hidden foundation of a thing must be revealed by a specific activity, philosophy can only arrive at an answer by developing various cognitive strategies. In addressing the question of the being and essence of the existing, philosophy has developed (and continues to develop) many concrete answers. A close look at their logical structure will reveal that all

³ From this aspect philosophy, in contrast to other sciences, does not dispose with a fund of generally accepted and conclusive knowledge, or with a specific "introduction to the profession" in the usual sense of the word. More precisely see for example Albrecht Wellmer, *Adorno, Anwalt des Nicht-Identischen. Eine Einführung*, in A. Wellmer, *Zur Dialektik von Moderne und Postmoderne* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1993), p. 135 ff.

these answers are, in a certain sense, the fruit of three macro-strategies which have developed through the long history of philosophizing. I will adopt W. Welsch's approach and call them *metaphysical*, *modernistic* and *postmodernistic*, and, as Welsch has done, employ the notions *aesthetisation* and *anaesthetisation*⁴ to illustrate them.

The *metaphysical* macro-strategy is defined by the belief that the hidden foundation of the existing can only be discovered by peeling off as thoroughly as possible its sensual, aesthetic shell. Thus, by means of *deaesthetisation*, which directs us from the sensual to the transcendental, from *aesthetic* (i.e. material, physical, sensual) to *anaesthetic* (i.e. nonsensual, reflective, spiritual). The metaphysical model attempts to maximize the difference between the sensual and the transcendental, which is why the predicates of the transcendental sphere (non-movable, non-changeable, non-spatial, non-temporal, etc.) are in all cases the negative predicates of the sensual sphere. This is also one of the traps of the metaphysical model.⁵ – On the other hand, the *modernistic* strategy announces a completely different model: *aesthetisation*. The being and essence of the existing can not be reached by eliminating the sensual, but, on the contrary, by intensively exploring its multiformity, by »attempting to penetrate through it« (but never successfully, due to the exclusiveness of a single direction and a single manner of such penetration). – The present-day *postmodernistic* strategy is seeking new ways of revealing the being and essence of the existing by functionally linking both models in order to avoid their traps. Its maxim is: to graft the anaesthetic on the aesthetic⁶ and »the whole only *via* difference.«⁷

Therefore, I may briefly summarize my view of the action range of philosophy as follows: philosophy is a reflected contemplation of the being and essence of the existing, which, in its plurality, appears as the inseparable unity of the aesthetic and the anaesthetic. The goal of philosophy is to explore the logic of this unity and the conceptual integration of the particular into a universal whole. Philosophy attains this goal by methodically questioning the existing and the known.

⁴ Cf. Welsch, *Ästhetisches Denken* (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, jun. Verlag, 1990), pp. 23–30.

⁵ Ibid., p. 25.

⁶ Ibid., pp. 110–111.

⁷ Cf. Wolfgang Welsch, *Unsere Postmoderne Moderne* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1993), pp. 60–63.

III. Topology of the Interactive Space

1. Context and its elements

As incomplete as the definitions of art, aesthetics and philosophy given above may seem, they nevertheless point to an interesting situation. They make it perfectly clear that, in spite of all of their radically different objectives and methods, art, aesthetics and philosophy have a recognizable common denominator: *all three deal in one way or another with the relation between the aesthetic and the anaesthetic.* – In my opinion this very fact is the proper basis for further reflection.

In other words, one could say that the *working space* of art, aesthetics and philosophy is the interaction area of the aesthetic and the anaesthetic. Therefore, I shall first attempt to show how this interaction area is manifested in man as the creator of these arts and sciences. – Man, says J. Huxley, is the indivisible and simultaneous unity of matter and spirit.⁸ This means that he lives at the intersection of two worlds and that man himself is the intersection of these two worlds: a closed material world, determined by physical impulses and determinisms, and an open, spiritual world, governed by the conceptual flexibility of the mind (*intellect*) and the liberty to make decisions (*will*). The first world existentially attaches man to »physics« or »aesthetics« (i.e. to the material and sensual objects and phenomena of the real world), while the second links man to »metaphysics« or »anaesthetics« (i.e. to phenomena founded on experience, such as substance, principle, essence, rule, law, etc.). This attachment makes man existentially unable to abandon neither the material nor the spiritual dimension of reality which he feels inside him, but even more, he extrapolates them to the external world and recognizes them as equal and equivalent parts of the whole comprised of the world and the universe. Man's existence is dependant on the *functional cooperation* of these two worlds, as the spirit can only constitute itself on a »background« of the material and the sensual, while the material and the sensual can only become humane reality when animated with the spiritual.

In man, the relation between the aesthetic and the anaesthetic presents itself in concrete form through man's activities. From this aspect one could say that art, aesthetics and philosophy are nothing more than *operational forms of exploring* relations between the aesthetic and the anaesthetic, adapted to their specific goals: (a) art is a form of exploring relations between form and content, (b) aesthetics is a form of exploring relations between percep-

⁸ Cf. Julian Huxley, *Essays of a Humanist* (London: Penguin Books and Chatto & Windus, 1964), p. 43.

tion and cognition, and (c) philosophy is a form of exploring relations between material and spiritual reality.

My fundamental question is, how do the particularities of these three forms of exploring relations between the aesthetic and the anaesthetic influence their behaviour in practical everyday interactions? Due to the vitality and complexity of the three spheres, a conclusive answer to this question is evidently impossible. But it is perhaps possible to identify a certain basic *logic* of their interactions, both those that have become historical facts and those still slumbering in the potencies of their natures. For this purpose I will attempt to enlighten the following relations: (a) philosophy ↔ aesthetics, (b) aesthetics ↔ art, and (c) art ↔ philosophy.

2. Philosophy ↔ Aesthetics

Of those mentioned, this relation is probably the most comprehensible and least problematic. It is an easily proven fact that, from the very beginning, even before acquiring its present name, aesthetics was a philosophical discipline in the full sense of the word. This means that it has always approached its »subjects« (the sensual, beauty, art) *in a philosophical way*, with the help of philosophical concepts, and in consonance with the current philosophical debates. This, of course, has its consequences. – Every science, including philosophy, has developed a specific corpus of fundamental concepts for the purpose of studying those contents within the sphere of its interest. Thus, when a certain science throws the net of its concepts beyond the reality it is studying, it can catch only those contents which its concepts are able to identify and its specific terminology capable of expressing (*Wittgenstein*). For aesthetics as a philosophical discipline, this means that it is capable of catching only the *philosophical* aspects of the realities studied. And, of course, realities have many more, equally significant aspects.

3. Aesthetics ↔ Art

The relation between aesthetics and art is more complex and complicated, primarily because this is still an open relation. It may be approached from two aspects dictated by the very history of aesthetics.

As already mentioned, aesthetics was not born of any special love of philosophers for art, but of their love for philosophy. The purpose of its interest in art was to develop and test philosophical themes and problems, because philosophy discovered that art was, from its viewpoint, an excellent »*modelsphere of reality*« in modern philosophical terms.⁹ One aspect of the

⁹ Cf. Welsch, *Ästhetisches Denken*, pp. 111–113.

relation between aesthetics and art is the inclination of aesthetics towards philosophy: with the help of aesthetics in art, philosophy is *searching for a path to itself*. The second, also historically documented, but much weaker aspect of this relation is the inclination of aesthetics towards art, a trend announced by Schiller¹⁰ and Nietzsche, which, in modified form, has extended into our period: aesthetics should stop being the *maid-servant of philosophy* and should devote itself more intensively to its subject.

a. *Aesthetics as a »philosophy via art«*

There are several reasons why, for many philosophical strategies, art is an extremely useful *»modelsphere of reality«*. I shall mention only two, in my opinion, key reasons. The first is that art does not explore the relation between the aesthetic and anaesthetic in a theoretical way, but *establishes it in practice*; in its highest achievements, art even managed to establish such relations in an exemplary (*archetypical*), purified (*catharsis*) and holistic way, again and again, and employing extremely plural solutions. In this respect art often is, for philosophy, a representative of reality, its concentrated *sucus*, which is considerably easier (despite the difficulties) to deal with than reality itself. Philosophers confirm this when they say that, for them, art is an *organon* which opens the door to the totality of reality¹¹ and to its extremely plural nature.¹² The second reason is that art as a phenomenon is so very complex and as a general notion such a flexible area that practically any philosophical theory can be tested and proven in this area.

If I attempt to schematically present the aesthetic strategy of *»philosophy via art«*, I could say that its basic purpose is the philosophical treatment of the relation between aesthetic and anaesthetic in the totality of the existing. But since unpleasantly extensive and unpurified reality makes the treatment of this relation difficult, philosophy attempts to attain the same goal indirectly: through the interaction of art (as a representational *»model«* of unpleasant reality) and aesthetics (as a philosophy open to the sensual).

The goal of aesthetics with such orientation is to develop, in confronting art, the concepts, reflective strategies and methods that will help philosophy to establish closer contacts with its subjects. For this reason it is required to provide answers to particularly certain major (epistemological and ontological) questions of philosophy, or even *»empirically«* defend certain already formulated general philosophical theses and positions. Even

¹⁰ Cf. W. Welsch, *Traditionelle und moderne Ästhetik in ihrem Verhältnis zur Praxis der Kunst. Überlegungen zur Funktion des Philosophen an Kunsthochschulen*, in *Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft*, vol. XXVIII/2 (1983), p. 265.

¹¹ Cf. *ibid.* p. 266.

¹² Cf. Welsch, *Ästhetisches Denken*, pp. 111–113.

when it is research oriented. Let me make the following analogy: aestheticians of this provenience have a similar attitude towards art as artists do towards nature – they consider it the source of (philosophical) motives and inspirations.

In this perspective both art and aesthetics are treated instrumentally.

b. Aesthetics as a philosophical inclination towards art

A different attitude towards art (and, of course, toward themselves) is fostered by aesthetic theories, which I conditionally refer to as »art-devoted« theories. These theories declaratively abandon the positions of philosophical instrumentalization of art and aesthetics, and attempt to approach art because of art itself. They attempt to meet art in its working environment, and are willing to view things from its perspective and contemplate art through the dioptr of *formative experience*. There are several reasons for such an open *inclination* of aesthetics towards art. One of the main reasons is, in the opinion of followers of this aesthetic trend, that art with its broad range of results has reached far beyond the boundaries of its own sphere; not, as in classical aesthetics, regressively to the field of philosophy, but progressively to the field of life.¹³ More specifically, in modern civilization, modern art has great diagnostic, therapeutic and development potentials to function as a »laboratory of sensual cognition«, as an indispensable modelsphere of reflection on the sensual and, consequently, of modern self-understanding.¹⁴ (However, it cannot be disregarded that even where there appears to be a sincere desire to bring aesthetics closer to art, there are still instrumentalizational motives immediately beneath the surface).

The fundamental motive of art-devoted aesthetics is to analytically explain the concrete formative strategies, development and social-critical potentials of each branch of art. Arts also explicitly wish to be – and this is supposedly even a criterion of their modernness – useful in the process of their creative self-reflection and self-articulation. Any dogmatism and any normativism are explicitly excluded; from this aspect, the role of aesthetics should be limited solely to that of a »maieutic ferment« (Welsch).

At this delicate point, art-devoted aesthetics always encounter difficulties due to the very »ontological difference« between the two fields, if I am allowed to employ such philosophical diction.

The first problem is in the fact that aesthetics can study art only when art is already articulated. Because art is continuously recreating itself by

¹³ Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Geburt der Tragödie*, in Kritische Gesamtausgabe vol. III/1, ed. G. Colli and M. Montinari (Berlin/New York 1977), p. 8.

¹⁴ Cf. Welsch, *Traditionelle und moderne Ästhetik in ihrem Verhältnis zur Praxis der Kunst*, pp. 272–273.

defining itself and thus exhausting its creative abilities, aesthetics only gets the opportunity to study it *post festum*. In other words: art has to die (in the creative sense) so that aesthetics can dissect (analyze) it. The primary position of an aesthetician in relation to art is the position of the user, not the producer. And, as P. Valéry writes in his famous *Cours de la poétique*, the producer and the user are two essentially separated systems. For the first, the product is the end, and for the second the beginning, of development. The ideas which the two of them have regarding the same work of art are not compatible.¹⁵ Valéry's theory of absolute difference may be exaggerated, yet I nevertheless support the opinion that the differences between the attitudes of an artist and an aesthetician towards a work of art should be considered. An aesthetician is – namely as an aesthetician, irrespective of his actually attitude towards art – the user of a work of art, although somewhat special, a user *a posteriori* condemned within the limits of his position and his philosophical roots.

An aesthetician is, on the one side, always too late to tell a creating artist what to look for and create, because when aestheticians finally discover, through investigation, what this is, their discoveries are no longer significant for the producer of art (the very moment art stops walking in front of aesthetics, it would no longer be art, but would return among crafts).

Like a philosopher, an aesthetician searches for the philosophical essence of art, which is why he finds it difficult to simultaneously take aesthetic pleasure in a work of art. His interest is devoted to the philosophical aspects of a work of art (and not its immanent artistic aspects), though the purpose and meaning of a work of art are never exhausted by them. An aesthetician's »infrastructural« philosophical system represents a barrier between him and a work of art.

This brings us to the second obstacle preventing aesthetics from being directly *useful* to art in the creative sense. Aesthetics as a philosophically *formatted* theory can never, in any form, be neutral towards art. It favours precisely those contents, forms, functions, problems, etc. in art which stem from the categories and axioms of its philosophical *background*. The basic method employed by aestheticians in relation to art could therefore be schematically described as follows: first of all they identify and delineate, depending on the categories and axioms of their philosophical infrastructure, the area of art which these categories and axioms are capable of covering, proclaim this area as art, and then, within such a restricted area, attempt to prove and »prove« that this is »true« art. Artists also use the same

¹⁵ Cf. B. Ghiselin, *The Creative Process* (London: A Mentor Book, 1961), p. 96.

method when, through their work, they delineate that part of reality which they are able to capture with their means and modes of expression, and shape it as their (artistic) reality. Evidently, a considerable amount of reality remains on the outside and is left to future generations of artists, who usually find their uncultivated fields precisely on this »remainder«. Nature, i.e. the real world, is such an extensive area that it cannot be fully exhausted by any art, nor can any aesthetics embrace art in all its dimensions.¹⁶

The model of aesthetic inclination towards art could be schematically presented as follows: aesthetics tries to take a true interest in art, but on this path it implicitly drags instrumentalizational intentions justified in its philosophical background.

On the one side one has to admit that, despite the »fatal attraction« that binds them, art and aesthetics are nevertheless two very different spiritual postures, each with its own categorical apparatus and way of thinking. The concepts and categories which they occasionally lend to one another usually change their character as soon as they are integrated in a specific system of artistic or philosophical thought. On the other side, there is no denying that it may be assumed, without exaggerating, that in relation to art, aesthetics has far from utilized all its reflexive potentials and that all great art also has *philosophical* dimensions.

c. *Aesthetics as a philosophical »centralizing on art«*

This last approach is, in my opinion, an opportunity for future interdisciplinary shifts in the relation between art and aesthetics. I have designated these shifts with the expression »centralizing on art«. In practice they are not numerous, but may be expected wherever (1) aesthetics begins to realize that artistic happenings are not merely a reflection of its philosophical background, and, with the reflexive experience it possesses, it makes itself available to the artist as a collaborator in the purification and articulation of the artist's formative thoughts and desires,¹⁷ and (2) the theories that have *autochthonously* grown from individual disciplines of art develop to a level of conceptual consistency allowing them to establish fruitful con-

¹⁶ Today it is becoming increasingly more clear that it is not possible to generalize and systematize all artistic expressions and styles in a single philosophical system. In the same way as philosophical systems differ among themselves, so do artistic expressions and the valuations of the world and life expressed in them. Only those aesthetic trends that grow from the same life substance and the same valuation of the world as artistic systems of expression are able to merge with them into sufficiently homogeneous reflective and paradigmatic emotional systems which allow understanding and mutual fertilizing.

¹⁷ Cf. W. Welsch, *Traditionelle und moderne Ästhetik in ihrem Verhältnis zur Praxis der Kunst*, p. 280.

ceptual contact with aesthetics as a philosophical discipline. Therefore, I can see the perspective in the interactive linking of an emancipated aesthetic theory prepared to offer art its reflexive philosophical services in the sphere of art's »philosophical dimensions«, and a theory of art that will give access to philosophical reflection and inspire aesthetics for the reflection of the artistic, aesthetic dimensions (i.e. bound to the sensual aspect of a certain branch of art) of arts.

For aesthetics, centralizing on art does not mean stepping from one form of slavery (maid of philosophy) into another (maid of art), but fully devoting itself to its »subject« and giving back to art what it managed to »tear away« from art in purified form by the sweat of its face. An aesthetics which manages to reach the tip of the brush, chisel and heart...

3. Art ↔ Philosophy

In its relation with art, philosophy can, in my opinion, equally utilize all three macrostrategies accessible through aesthetics: *instrumental* (philosophy via art), *metainstrumental* (philosophical inclination towards art) and *phenomenological* or *investigative* (philosophical centralizing on art). Depending, of course, on the circumstances and current goals. Philosophy can see in art the key that opens the door of reality, a means of helping it to grow, a phenomenon that addresses and reflexively inspires it, or as a complex reality whose dimensions it wishes to discover. – Something similarly gradual is seen in philosophy by art or the artist as he replenishes his »philosophical« tanks for new expressive feats.

IV. Code

The relation between art, aesthetics and philosophy presented in this contribution is, as was expected, merely a rough (macro) »mapping« of the interactive space. I do feel, however, that this contribution has the potential to open a debate on the practical need for more systematic reflection on the relations between art, aesthetics and philosophy, and offers a good starting point. This starting point could be the following: thinking about art is possible only with its assistance. Without its help we are unable to enter into it. If, in the course of creation, an artist thinks about his art, then theoreticians should also make an effort to understand his artistic »language«. This is the only way they understand and realize that art – in the same way as philosophy – is continuously questioning itself about itself, that it is questionable to its own self, and thus far from being something that is self-understandable.

Dabney Townsed
Aesthetics and the Representation of Discovery

I

Aesthetics in its philosophical sense has its origins in the seventeenth and eighteenth century rationalist and empiricist assertions of the primacy of individual experience. The details of this have been worked out in the last thirty years by scholars such as Jerome Stolnitz and George Dickie,¹ and we have come to an increased appreciation of the complexity of those origins. In particular, concepts of taste, aesthetic experience, and the emergence of an aesthetic attitude have their origins in the primacy of individual perception in epistemology, in the emergence of individual feeling and emotion as legitimate parts of value systems, and in the turn to the natural sciences as the model for explanation.

The systematic linkage between science and aesthetics is obvious in many instances. Both Leibnizian rationalism and Newtonian empiricism find their aesthetic counterparts in A. G. Baumgarten's »aesthetics«² and Francis Hutcheson's »sense of beauty«³ respectively, for example. From these philosophical investigations there has emerged a parallel recognition of the cultural shifts that shape this modernist aesthetic. Taste as a metaphor for aesthetic perception and value can be linked to renaissance art theory. The

¹ Stolnitz, J. (1961). »Of the Origins of 'Aesthetic Disinterestedness'«. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 20 (winter): 131-143. Stolnitz, J. (1961). »On the Significance of Lord Shaftesbury in Modern Aesthetic Theory.« *The Philosophical Quarterly* 2, 43 (April): 97-113. Stolnitz, J. (1961). »Beauty: Some Stages in the History of an Idea.« *The Journal of the History of Ideas* 22, 2 (April-June): 185-204. Stolnitz, J. (1978). »The 'Aesthetic Attitude' in the Rise of Modern Aesthetics.« *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 36 (Summer): 409-422. Dickie, G. (1984). »Stolnitz' Attitude: Taste and Perception.« and Stolnitz, J. (1984). »The Aesthetic Attitude in the Rise of Modern Aesthetics – Again.« *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 43 (Winter): 193-208. Dickie, G. (1974). *Art and the Aesthetic: An Institutional Analysis*. Ithaca, Cornell University Press. Dickie, G. (1996). *The Century of Taste*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

² Baumgarten, A. G. (1954.). *Reflections on Poetry (Meditationes philosophicae de nonnullis ad poema pertinentibus)*. Berkeley, University of California Press.

³ Hutcheson, F. (1725). *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*. London, J. Darby.

individualism of reformation theology and the political breakdown of divine authority motivate a move away from religious and court patronage in the direction of a more mercantile art world. Critical notions of history go hand in hand with the rise of the novel as a fictional form of historical narrative. Individual experience of nature finds its expression in a desire for the picturesque, which in turn helps shape the aesthetic categories of expression and imagination that lead to romanticism. The details of aesthetics as a philosophical language and as a mode of awareness can be traced in almost every level of culture from the lending library and reading public to the world of landscape gardening.

Among the areas yet to be adequately explored, however, is the interrelation of aesthetics with the process of discovery. Several aspects here deserve attention. First, philosophers such as John Locke, who provide the empiricist foundations for aesthetics,⁴ are actively involved in the entrepreneurial aspects of discovery. Locke, in his role as advisor to the first earl of Shaftesbury, provides the political foundation as well as participating as a director in the Carolinas colonization. The connection with aesthetics here may at first seem tenuous, but it becomes clearer when one examines the stylistic and architectural elements in starting a new town or plantation. Just as landscape gardening provided a model for assimilating nature to the new aesthetic of sense and sensibility, so the new world provides a means of turning Newtonian mechanism and invention into aesthetics expressions. London's squares and Edinburgh's New Town set the model for the aesthetic assimilation of an urban environment. The carefully laid out towns of Charleston and Savannah are works of art whose material is the new land itself.

Second, the fascination with travel literature, both actual and imagined, brings discovery into literature. In much the same way that picturesqueness helps introduce distance into the rural landscape in such a way that landscape itself becomes art rather than agriculture,⁵ travel provides distance from the ordinary and thus aestheticizes the otherness of the world. The step to imagined and impossible voyages (Robinson Crusoe and Gulliver, for example) is the logical aesthetic extension of this fascination with the new and physically distant.

⁴ Townsend, D. (1991). »Lockean Aesthetics.« *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 49, 4 (Fall): 349-361.

⁵ Barrell, J. (1990). »The Public Prospect and the Private View: The Politics of Taste in Eighteenth-Century Britain« in *Reading Landscape: Country - City - Capital*. Ed. S. Pugh. Manchester, Manchester University Press: 19-40. Townsend, D. (1997). »The Picturesque.« *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 55, 4 (Fall): 365-376.

A particular exemplification of this impulse can be found in the history of cartography and the place of maps in the popular culture of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Discovery both produces and relies on map making, and map making, in its turn, evolves in the context of mathematically sound science. Latitude, longitude, and projection are the cultural equivalent of freeing perspective and color from religious iconography in renaissance painting. Even in the most utilitarian maps, there is an underlying aesthetic of fascination with and thrill in the unknown and new combined with a scientific attitude toward geographical knowledge and information.

E. H. Gombrich sets out an important contrast between maps and pictures: »Maps are normally designed to impart information about the invariant features of an area, in other words they leave 'appearances' on one side. There are no maps of Vienna in moonlight or of the museums out of focus. Nor would it be welcome if maps aroused unexpected visual sensations such as flicker. . . . We speak of reading a map, and its foremost requirement is indeed that it should be as distinct as possible. Where such differentiation fails the use is put in jeopardy.«⁶ But maps are not independent of the conventions of representation by which they are read. So maps, like pictures, depend on background information. But in contrast to some ways of regarding pictures, maps serve to correct an extreme relativism about representation. »The great variety of styles we encounter in the images of past and present civilizations cannot be assessed and interpreted without a clear understanding of the dominant purpose they are intended to serve. It is the neglect of this dimension which has suggested to some critics that the range of representational styles must somehow reflect a variety of ways in which the world is seen. There is only one step from this assumption to the assertion of a complete cultural relativism which denies that there are standards of accuracy in visual representation because it is all a matter of convention.« Gombrich continues »Once more it is useful at this point to refer to the example of the map. For it is hard to be completely relativistic about maps. There can be mistakes in maps which can be systematically rectified. . . . This technique [surveying], moreover, has nothing to do with the way the world is seen, for the surveyor who wants to map the invariant features of a region can and will never rely on that elusive guide, his visual impression of the landscape.«⁷ Thus maps have an informational function and a representational function. They differ from pictures in not relying on appearances, but

⁶ Gombrich, E. H. (1982). »Mirror and Map: Theories of Pictorial Representation.« *The Image and the Eye*. Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 183.

⁷ Reinhartz, D. (1997). *The Cartographer and the Literati – Herman Moll and His Intellectual Circle*. Lewiston, MA, Edward Mellen Press, 188.

they share with pictures our need for prior information about the keys and conventions if we are to read them accurately.

The analogy between pictures and maps used by Gombrich reveals the duality in the representational qualities of maps. They are not limited to their informational function. The interesting question is whether this is simply comparable to any utilitarian object becoming an aesthetic object, or whether there is something specifically in maps that plays a role not only in their own aestheticization but in the conceptualization of the aesthetic more generally at the point in time – the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries – that philosophical aesthetics takes shape. I think that the latter is the case.

II

The dual aspect of objects such as maps leads inexorably to the separation of the aesthetic and utilitarian that slowly and gradually takes place in the eighteenth century on a broad scale. David Hume and Adam Smith still regard beauty as having its roots in function and use, but by the end of the century, beauty is »all ye know and need to know.« It stands alone once again as it did in its Platonic forms, but now it is located wholly within the sensitive realm of individual feeling.

One aspect of the separation of the utilitarian and aesthetic can be seen in the way that maps are produced and used. Color serves the function of delineating areas, but its appeal goes beyond its utilitarian function because the map becomes an item of display. If one examines a typical late medieval map of Oxfordshire, for example, one finds representations of villages crowded together so that their sole use is to reinforce the written names. While the representation is pictorial, it makes little allowance for display. On the other hand, a Herman Moll map as discussed by Dennis Reinhartz⁸ is a form of display, designed as much for the eye as for guidance in location. It is an example of the engraver's art. Moll is an entrepreneur with his own shop, engraving maps for an audience that will never use them as guides to travel but wants to participate in the new knowledge that they represent. Maps assume a decorative role; they occupy a place on the wall of the Dutch burgher depicted by Vermeer not only as a representation of Dutch colonial expansion and wealth but also as a mark of taste. The new itself takes on value and confers on its owners and discoverers the kind of reputation for good taste recommended by Balthazar Gracian.⁹

⁸ Ibid., 23-28.

⁹ Gracian, B. (1945). *The Art of Worldly Wisdom*. New York, The Macmillan Company.

In renaissance painting, flora, fauna, and landscape come to play an important role in exhibiting color and form for its own sake rather than its religious and mythical significance. What begins as background becomes eventually itself the object of the painting. An eye for detail and direct observation of nature so that individual plants and places can be identified transform painting into an individual exhibition of knowledge, skill, and taste. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the decorative embroidery of maps draws another element, the newness of the unknown and its subordination to exploration and conquest, into the aesthetic realm.¹⁰ While this is only one aspect of the aestheticization of nature, it exemplifies particularly well the way that aesthetic categories emerge from the seventeenth and eighteenth cultural shifts in economy, science, and philosophy.

Out of these shifts in cultural perception and intellectual assignment of evidential importance emerges Immanuel Kant's concept of the aesthetic as a fully disinterested form of pre-theoretical and pre-practical intuition. »Interest« is a complex concept, however. Jules Lubbock points out one complication in the development of different concepts of »interest.« Lubbock distinguishes between an emerging market economy based on competitive consumption and the earlier economy based on a »stable but prosperous rural economy.«¹¹ In the latter economy, consumption by the landed gentry was a public obligation. Both private and public interest had to be defined differently than they are in the economy of competitive consumption. Lubbock observes: »It seems incorrect to say that the difference between then and now is that the 'concept of a great nobleman serving the public for duty rather than gain' did not then exist. There is strong evidence of a sense of duty amongst leading statesmen and lesser gentry. But perhaps they did not possess our clear-cut distinction between the public interest and the private interest of a leading figure who was a member of the government. This blurring of distinctions is clearly seen in Burghley's gardens, one of the rare arts in which he seems quite genuinely to have delighted, so much so that one of his few relaxations was to travel round his gardens on a donkey. Such gardens as these were ornamental, 'the purest of human pleasures ... the greatest refreshment to the spirit of man' but they also had a scientific and commercial importance.«¹² For Burghley, private consumption was a public obligation. In contrast, a new distinction between public and private interest develops in the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Interest is con-

¹⁰ See, for example, the Sheldon Tapestry map of London mentioned by Jules Lubbock. Lubbock, J. (1995). *The Tyranny of Taste*. New Haven, Yale University Press, 82.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, xiv.

¹² *Ibid.*, 68-69.

ceived as private interest, and public interest must be defended as disinterested in the private sense. One may not profit from public responsibility, but one is also not privately obligated to spend for the public good. Public life and private character are separated in a way that disturbed the third earl of Shaftesbury.¹³ Public, moral disinterestedness continues to develop into the notion of «aesthetic distinterestedness» that is finally fully conceived in the early nineteenth century.

Utilitarian objects such as gardens and maps appeal both to the eye and the ends for which they are made. But the complex relations of personal, individual pleasure, private interest, and public interest introduce tensions, particularly when private and public interest are separated by the market economy. Lubbock argues that «good design» – the valuing of an object for its quality and style – is dependent on an ideological conservatism that seeks to stabilize society by maintaining class distinctions and an agrarian, non-commercial economy. A new taste for mass-produced goods that appeal to a more common taste and the economy that makes them affordable to a wider group promotes the commercial interests of London against the country and of the lower and middle classes against the luxury-affording aristocracy.

What follows for a range of art objects and objects of pleasure is that in order for them to continue to serve their aesthetic function, they must be distanced from their utilitarian functions because aesthetic appreciation brings them into conflict with the commercial economy and its new way of distinguishing between private and public interest. In that economy, instead of luxury being a social obligation so that wealth will trickle down to the peasantry, luxury must be justified by its own ends. That cannot be done if its social consequences are considered. Esoteric, individual pleasure conflicts with social need. The demands of the masses threaten the social stability based on landed obligations to consume so that others might work. If one belongs to the rising classes, then luxury is increasingly seen as the illegitimate ends of the ancient regime that exists at the expense of the lower and middle classes. If aesthetic pleasure is to be retained by anyone, it must be reconceived as an end in its own right, freed from the interest of either luxury or utility, and that is just what the rise of modern aesthetics does.

What this means, of course, is that while aesthetic pleasure is a reality in both earlier and later ideologies, and in fact may be fairly close to a universal wherever the exigencies of survival permit, our conceptualization of

¹³ See, for example, Cooper, A. A. Earl of Shaftesbury (1964). «The Moralists: A Philosophical Rhapsody» in *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*. J. M. Robertson. Indianapolis, Bobbs, Merrill. II.

it as disinterested and autonomous – the root meaning of »aesthetic« that emerges from the eighteenth-century theories – must be viewed with some skepticism. Whether one is considering gardening or maps, the utilitarian and aesthetic are not independent of each other nor of the context in which they emerge. They are, if one will allow a bit of jargon, different actualizations of possibilities inherent in aesthetic objecthood.

The case of maps is especially clear. A map is at once a picture and a guide. It is used to plan such things as gardens and new towns – to map out a landscape – and it is used to provide travel directions and conceptual schematizations of a world not immediately known. As a picture, a map invites embellishment and imagination. Herman Moll drew maps not only of real places but of imagined ones. A map's representative function is satisfied best by making it a thing to be viewed, and that easily includes viewing it independently of its guiding function.

But as a guide, it also is a conceptual scheme. The importance of different projections depends both on how they make the map look and the information that they can convey. Before satellites, no one actually was able to view the patterns and topography of the earth. How lands and routes are conceived requires a symbol-system for the mind to employ. When the unknown is labeled, »there be dragons,« more than simply a confession of ignorance is implied. One is moving into the chaos of the ill-formed from the cosmos of the ordered world. Neither as picture nor as guide is there any conflict between the functions and the pleasure that eventuates from a picture and from the ordered conceptualization of space. The purely utilitarian aspect of a travel guide may be served as well by an unembellished map as one artfully colored and decorated, but the utility itself involves conceptualization. One does not simply travel from A to B but from London to Edinburgh – places of the mind as much as geographical locations.

The tensions arise because conceptualization itself is not neutral. Terry Eagleton is right to remind us that the aesthetic autonomy that results is not itself autonomous.¹⁴ One factor in the larger picture of middle-class, mercantile appropriation of the symbols of power and art that contributes to the aestheticization of the middle class's own material interests can be found in maps used for display and decorated for aesthetic effects. Everyone can adopt this symbol of power and conquest without having to consider the actual consequences of colonial and mercantile conquest.¹⁵ If a map becomes

¹⁴ Eagleton, T. (1990). *The Ideology of the Aesthetic*. Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 3.

¹⁵ In the same context, and as a part of the same aesthetic movement, one might consider Thomas Lawrence's portrait of Queen Charlotte – at once a royal portrait in the tradition of court painting and a representation of the German hausfrau, stripped of regal trappings. (It is also an entrepreneurial effort on Lawrence's part that failed.)

a symbol of the breaking out of the old world into a wider new world; if it is connected with the making of new fortunes, independent of the old order and the old landed assignments, if it is an instrument of commerce and thus opposed to the stable, agrarian society longed for by the old order, then thinking in terms of maps and what they show is a threat to that old order. If a map belongs to a class and an economic ideology, then it is never just an autonomous conceptual structure. To hang a map on the wall or to use it as the cartoon for a tapestry is to make a statement, to identify oneself with the aspirations of the explorers and commercial interests that depend on its information. But it does so in a way that does not require the risk and danger of exploration, any more than the fictional worlds of the novel require one to experience the real vicissitudes of society. Tom Jones would certainly be hanged in that world.

Yet as a picture and as an ordering device, a map cannot be limited to a single ideology. The kind of reductionism that would make any symbol nothing more than an expression of some political or economic ideology ignores the phenomenology of the aesthetic. To save the aesthetic, therefore, one must move the symbol from its ideological and utilitarian setting. That is already implicit in the detachment that arises from display. To hang the map on the wall, to include it in a painting, to weave it into a commercial product is already to detach it from its basic informational and utilitarian function. Thus the aesthetic in its modern signification emerges from the tension between what the map is and what it must be in order to be enjoyed.

That too results in a conceptual ideology, however. Modern aesthetics is not a simple analytical detachment. The promotion of the aesthetic as an autonomous realm is a »saving of the appearances« that is fundamentally in conflict with its own origins. The result is the kind of nineteenth-century aestheticism and twentieth-century anti-social and avant-garde movements in art and philosophy that deny the context of the object. Ultimately, such detachment makes the aesthetic irrelevant and unable to fulfil the expressive function assigned to it. If we cease to care what maps are maps of, they cease to be maps. Then not only the utilitarian function but the enjoyment that belongs to their aesthetic appeal is lost.

III

What is needed is to extract from this economic, political, and ideological mix a coherent philosophical argument as well. A first attempt at that

might consider that maps and other forms of symbolic appropriation of the trappings of upper-class power are a form of symbolic action along the lines of speech-act theory or the theory of conferral advocated by George Dickie.¹⁶ They serve not merely to represent, as Gombrich argues, but also to create a relationship between an audience and what becomes a form of expression. The imitative aspect of maps, found in their utilitarian function to represent invariant properties, gives them legitimacy as forms of representation. But imitation theories of art belong to the ideal world that supports the aristocratic power structure. The rights of the aristocracy are based on a complex chain of being that gives legitimacy to their right to rule. For the new map-makers and map-users, however, the maps work to shift power to those who appreciate them. They empower the entrepreneurs, and they allow others to exhibit them and participate vicariously in this expansion of the world. As such, it is not their imitative possibilities but their expressive ones that are important. It does not matter much to the aesthetics of maps whether they are accurate or not. It matters a great deal how they look, including what they are taken to bring forward. An imaginary landscape will do as well as a real one if the object is to express and evoke feelings, so Salvatore Rosa, Claude Lorraine, and the seventeenth-century Dutch genre and landscape painters create the kind of landscape that will be picturesque. Gardens imitate art. Maps work the same way. They create an imaginary world of expansion and feelings of excitement. Then bourgeois life imitates art in this respect as well.

Underlying this analysis is something important about the relation between representation, fiction, and the functioning of language and symbols. I have argued elsewhere (without much success, it must be admitted), that metaphors and fictions work by creating quasi-imperative rules that guide the player – that is, the person who seeks to understand something metaphorical or to participate in a fictional world – and that those imperatives take precedence over the normal structure of indicative description and assertion.¹⁷ One of the basic powers of symbolic construction is this kind imperative activity that both establishes and teaches the rules by which one is allowed to understand a world. Because those rules are both constrained by reality and subject to modification arbitrarily within limits, they account for the dual nature of metaphors as at once non-literal and legitimate forms of speech. Similarly, they account for our ability to instantiate fictions and

¹⁶ Dickie, G. (1974). *Art and the Aesthetic: An Institutional Analysis*. Ithaca, Cornell University Press and (1984). *The Art Circle*. New York, Haven.

¹⁷ Townsend, D. (1989). *Aesthetic Objects and Works of Art*. Wakefield, NH, Longwood Academic Press.

incorporate them into our emotional lives in spite of the absurdity pointed out by Colin Radford.¹⁸

I now suggest that in the transitional period when aesthetics becomes aesthetics in its modernist sense and ceases to be the neo-Platonic theory of beauty, the transformation of symbols of power by quasi-utilitarian forms such as maps, gardening, and royal portraiture act as part of this larger symbolic construction. They provide forms by which one is enabled to play the games coherently in a new way. Or, to adapt Dickie's vocabulary, they are part of the institutional shift that confers authority on one part of symbol users to establish new ways of using old symbols and creates new symbolic forms as well (e.g. the novel and the reading public, the bourgeois theater in place of the masque, history instead of allegory, etc.) Unlike Dickie's earlier versions of the institutional theory, I argue that not just anyone can practice this conferral. The authority required comes from the economic and material realities of a culture. But what is created as a result of that authority is itself implicated in an expanding ability to practice such conferral and to establish the rules of the metaphorical and fictional games. Those metaphors, fictions, and symbols, reciprocally, empower that portion of a culture that creates them.

The important thing is to recognize that this is not simply a cultural relativism. It all takes place within very real constraints. Some of those constraints are physical – as physical as the plague that undermined the medieval synthesis or the map-maker's surveys. Other constraints are economic, the no less real constraints of the theories and systems of exchange and wealth. Art exists in every situation thus far known to us. The aesthetic theories that arise in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries supply one form of art and appreciation, one based on individual sensibility and aesthetic autonomy. That does not make that appreciation and autonomy any less real, however. One cannot do everything at any time. But at any time, there will be something that art is capable of doing. I am arguing that if we look at what is actually happening in the artworld in relation to its economic, cultural, and social context and simultaneously at the way that representational and referential systems work, we will be able to see, judge, and appreciate the art that belongs to that particular artworld. That is at once the timelessness and the timeliness of art. It is not bound by its point of creation, but it depends on that point for its concrete form, and without that concrete form, there is no art.

¹⁸ Radford, C. (1975). »How Can We Be Moved by the Fate of Anna Karenina?« *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 49: 67-80 and Radford, C. (1977). »Tears and Fictions.« *Philosophy* 52: 208-213.

Maps are thus both one of the ways that we determine what is actually happening and one of the clearest instances of how it can happen. It would have been pointless and unthinkable to treat maps as objects of decoration for the bourgeois until the bourgeois were in a position to change the economic and political rules. Once they were, maps also become a means of advancing the new order, including a new aesthetic sensibility. One might compare them to what goes on with book illumination as it moves from sacred to royal and then profane contexts and finally issues in the traveling libraries and reader subscriptions of a reading public. The aesthetics of disinterestedness and aesthetic attitudes is at once the reality and the ideology of that new, modernist order.

Richard Woodfield

Photography and the Imagination¹

Debates over the status of photography as an art form have more than a theoretical interest, they have practical implications as well. It was only very recently that the Tate Gallery in London allowed photography into its collection of modern art. The previous policy was to collect artists' photographs on the basis that their interest was parasitic on the artist's actual artworks. Thus Paul Nash's photographs were held on the basis that they were important to his creation of paintings, they were, if you like, documents for the study of his practice, and Richard Long's photographs were collected on the grounds that they documented or, even, authenticated his land art. Given a choice, the gallery would still prefer to collect photographs on the basis of their links with a centrally acknowledged art world than on the basis of their links with general photographic practice. While one finds documentary photography included in the history of photography as an art form the Tate has, up until this moment, declared a strong lack of interest in collecting works by leading documentary photographers. Photographs have been collected on the basis that they have been used to document art but not on the basis that they are interesting as a documentary art form.

In the British artworld, the most important collections of photographic art are housed by the Royal Photographic Society in Bath, which is in the Provinces and therefore artistically marginal, and in the Victoria and Albert Museum, which is the country's leading museum of decorative arts. While there have been strong arguments over transferring the V&A's collection of drawings by John Constable to the Tate, there have been no similar arguments over its photographic collection.

Looking at the photography that the Tate is currently in the process of collecting one may see that it has a pedigree in sculpture on the one hand and conceptual art on the other. In the same way that back in the 70's *The Art of the Real* was conceptualized as effectively two dimensional sculpture or three dimensional painting, Tate sponsored photography has been conceptualized as a two dimensional realization of a three dimensional subject,

¹ This is the first part of a tripartite paper on the possible status of photographs as works of art. The first part of the paper is historical, the second part will have a theoretical perspective and the third part will be philosophical.

as in the work of Andy Goldsworthy, or as a material realization of a thought, as in the work of Victor Burgin. This isn't confined to the Tate. It is a current curatorial practice. There is a growing sense of a difference between artists' photographers and photographers' photographers in the terms in which critics describe their work and the galleries in which their work is exhibited.

This is where we get to the starting point of my paper. It is the artworld which determines whether or not photography will achieve recognition as an art form and it is the artworld which provides the rationale. In the same way that titling and context of production have a bearing on our response to Danto's fictional red paintings, described at the beginning of *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace*, strategies of curation and criticism have a bearing on the ways in which we might be invited to respond to photographs.

With this in mind, I would like to turn to Baudelaire's famous *Salon of 1859* in which he celebrated »Imagination, the Queen of the Faculties« and berated photography for its attempt to achieve the same status as Art.

Photographs had previously been exhibited in the Great Exhibition held in Paris in 1855 but on that occasion they were excluded from the Palais des Beaux-Arts and included in the Industry section. In 1859, the Société Française de la Photographie persuaded the Ministry to allow it to exhibit at the same time as the Salon des Beaux-Arts, in the same building, but in a different area; it had to be entered by a separate door.

Baudelaire's paid employment, as a critic, was to review the art so he concentrated his attentions on the painting, on which he spent 56 pages. He also spent 12 pages on sculpture, probably more out of a sense of duty than conviction. And he spent 3 to 4 pages on photography, using those pages to reinforce his attack on the contemporary taste for realism in painting. For him, photography was a minor issue; there could have been no way in which even the best photographs could have been a match for his favorite paintings. One can't even be sure that he bothered to look at the photographs as we know from his correspondence with his friend Nadar that his Review had been written with little regard for the work actually on exhibition. As he described it, his review offered »something like the account of a rapid philosophical walk through the galleries«.² His central concern was the state of contemporary painting, which he saw as suffering from the blight of realism.

In his rather brief discussion of photography, his central concern was the way in which it might offer an absolute value in terms of the possibili-

² »The Salon of 1859« in *Art in Paris 1845-1862: Salons and Other Exhibitions reviewed by Charles Baudelaire*, translated and edited by Jonathan Mayne, London 1965, p. 144.

ties of realistic depiction. As he said, the realist painters and their admiring audience shared the creed

»I believe in Nature, and I believe only in Nature ... I believe that Art is, and cannot be other than, the exact reproduction of Nature ... Thus an Industry that could give us a result identical to Nature would be the absolute of art.«

Their wishes were answered

A revengeful God has given ear to the prayers of this multitude. Daguerre was his Messiah. And now the faithful says to himself: »since Photography gives us every guarantee of exactitude... , then Photography and Art are the same thing.«³

From a rhetorical standpoint, it was only necessary for Baudelaire to warn of the absurdities of photographic practice which aspired to the condition of art in order to be able to condemn realist painting. He had already set the stage for his attack on painting by addressing the subject of the discord between their titles and their appearances:

Amour et Gibelotte! Doesn't that immediately whet the appetite of your curiosity? »Love and Rabbit-stew!« Let me try and make an intimate combination of these two ideas, the idea of love and the idea of a rabbit skinned and made into a stew. I can hardly suppose that the painter's imagination can have gone so far as to fit a quiver, a pair of wings and an eyebandage upon the corpse of a domestic animal; the allegory would be really too obscure. I imagine that the title has been invented upon the recipe of *Misanthropie et Repentir*. The true title would thus be *Lovers eating a Rabbit-Stew*. Now you will ask, are they young or old, a laborer and a working-girl, or perhaps a tired veteran and a waif, in some dusty bower? I really ought to have seen the picture!⁴

There is an obvious gap between what the artist thinks that he is achieving, an *Idea*, to use the jargon of academic theory which was still very alive in the nineteenth century, and what he actually achieved, which was a scene of the utmost banality. The artist used his title to pitch his painting at a higher level of accomplishment than he was actually capable of achieving. In another context, speaking of the 'painter of modern life', Baudelaire spoke of his desire that the artist should amalgamate the actual with the ideal. The *flâneur*, the solitary man »gifted with an active imagination, ceaselessly journeying across the great human desert« is looking for a quality called »modernity«

He makes it his business to extract from fashion whatever element it may contain of poetry within history, to distil the eternal from the transitory.

³ *Ibid*, p. 152.

⁴ *Ibid*, p. 150.

... By »modernity« I mean the ephemeral, the fugitive, the contingent, the half of art whose other half is the eternal and the immutable.⁵

Baudelaire's criticism of the painter of *Amour et Gibelotte* was that his image was rooted in the merely contingent and a contingency which would make no demands upon a complacent audience. He was as hostile to the audience which admired the painting as he was to the painting itself despite the fact that he hadn't even seen it and that it might be half decent.

He underlined the discordancy between ambition and result by imagining a photograph which tackled a subject of the highest artistic value, a history painting:

Strange abominations took form. By bringing together a group of male and female clowns, got up like butchers and laundry-maids at a carnival, and by begging these *heroes* to be so kind as to hold their chance grimaces for the time necessary for the performance, the operator flattered himself that he was reproducing tragic or elegant scenes from ancient history. Some democratic writer ought to have seen here a cheap method of disseminating a loathing for history and painting among the people, thus committing a double sacrilege and insulting at one and the same time the divine art of painting and the noble art of the actor.⁶

Baudelaire is, here, actually engaging in a thought experiment. He invites his readers to imagine the clash between a heroic subject and a *realistic* representation of the models who would normally pose for the subject. He was as well aware as everyone else that the figures in such paintings were supposed to be idealized products of the imagination; the true artist would never leave his model uncorrected. Uncorrected models are bad enough in the imagination, they simply exist at the level of bad drawings, but bad models in photography are worse than that: they are downright ungainly if not plug ugly. Remember that Baudelaire was writing for a middle class audience, which prided itself on its airs and graces. He is asking that audience to believe that its most cherished ideals could be represented in the form of butchers and laundry-maids, practitioners of smelly, stench-generating trades. As there could be nothing to admire in such people, why should realist painters believe that there is anything to admire about their subjects:

⁵ *The Painter of Modern Life*, pp. 12-13.

⁶ *Salon of 1859*, p. 153. Note also George Bernard Shaw's observation in *Wilson's Photographic Magazine*, L VI (1909): »There is a terrible truthfulness about photography. The ordinary academician gets hold of a pretty model, paints her as well as he can, calls her Juliet, and puts a nice verse from Shakespeare underneath, and the picture is admired beyond measure. The photographer finds the same girl, he dresses her up and photographs her, and calls her Juliet, but somehow it is no good – it is still Miss Wilkins, the model. It is too true to be Juliet.«

the painterly equivalent of butchers and laundry-maids was people devoid of any human interest.

It might be thought that Baudelaire's enthusiasm for the painting of modern life might have opened his mind to the possibilities of photographic practice. But in its state of technical development in 1859, that would have been only a remote possibility, demanding a more imaginative response to the image than Baudelaire was prepared to offer. Baudelaire's favorite »painter of modern life« was Constantine Guys whose interest in the fugitive aspects of life was developed through his use of the sketch and whose subject was the crowd »responding to each one of its movements and the flickering grace of all the elements of life«. ⁷ The long exposure times demanded by photography in 1859 rendered it incapable of simulating flicker, indeed its central problem, in artistic terms, was the complete continuity of detail in its imagery: it did not offer the possibility of selective focus, as did painting. If the painter of modern life could focus on the transitory changes of fashion, *that* neckline or that collar, the photographer could not be so selective. *That* neckline could be easily undermined by *that* neck!

The problem with realistic painting, for Baudelaire, was its attention to technique as the expense of an imaginative treatment of subject. In 1859, Baudelaire felt that photography's

true duty, ... is to be the servant of the sciences and arts ... (L)et it be the secretary and clerk of whoever needs an absolute factual exactitude in his profession ... But if it be allowed to encroach upon the domain of the palpable and the imaginary ... then it will be so much the worse for us. ⁸

While *Amour et Gibelotte*, like photography, tied the imagination down, Guys' sketches released it. For later critics Baudelaire's mistake was not to underestimate the possibilities of photography, it was to hold up Guys as a hero rather than his friend Manet. For the historian of photography, 1859 was early days and, as Lady Eastlake observed, in her very thorough essay for the *London Quarterly Review* two years earlier, there were a great many technical problems still to be overcome.

At the end of his *Short History of Photography* Walter Benjamin, who was one of Baudelaire's greatest admirers, commented :

One thing ... was not grasped ... by Baudelaire, and that is the direction implicit in the authenticity of the photograph. It will not always be possible to link this authenticity with reportage, whose clichés associate themselves only verbally in the viewer. The camera will become smaller

⁷ *The Painter of Modern Life*, p. 9.

⁸ *Salon of 1859*, p. 145.

and smaller, more and more prepared to grasp fleeting, secret images whose shock will bring the mechanism of association in the viewer to a complete halt. At this point captions must begin to function, captions which understand the photography which turns all the relations of life into literature, and without which all photographic construction must remain bound in coincidences.⁹

This is, of course, a typically inscrutable Benjaminian remark: what can we make of it? He was certainly not interested in elevating photography to the status of Art. As he declared in his essay on the work of art in the age of its mechanical reproducibility:

... much futile thought had been devoted to the question of whether photography is an art. The primary question – whether the very invention of photography had not transformed the entire nature of art – was not raised.¹⁰

What he is talking about is the use of the photograph as an object of social insight:

Not for nothing were pictures of Atget compared with those of the scenes of a crime. But is not every spot of our cities the scene of a crime? every passerby a perpetrator? Does not the photographer – descendant of augurers and haruspices – uncover guilt in his pictures. It has been said that »not he who is ignorant of writing but ignorant of photography will be the illiterate of the future.« But isn't a photographer who can't read his own pictures worth less than an illiterate? Will not captions become the essential component of picture? Those are the questions in which the gap of 90 years that separates today from the age of the daguerrotype discharges its historical tension. It is in the light of these sparks that the first photographs emerge so beautifully, so unapproachably from the darkness of our grandfathers' days.¹¹

Benjamin took the view that the spectator who was sensitive to history and to social life would experience the shock of confronting the optical unconscious in the photographic image. Photographs of the Parisian *bourgeoisie* betrayed, for him, their very social being, their mode of existence in social life, in the same way that August Sander's photographs revealed, for him, the very structure of contemporary German society. If photography was to be an Art then it would be one produced by the imaginative caption writer, no less a person than Walter Benjamin himself. Benjamin was one of the many writers for whom the business of being a critic was co-extensive with

⁹ »A Short History of Photography« reprinted in Alan Trachtenberg (ed.), *Classic Essay on Photography*, New Haven 1980, p. 215.

¹⁰ »The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction« in Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, translated by Harry Zohn, London 1970, p. 229.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

being an artist. Photography stood in need of completion and he was the person who was going to complete it.

As the saying goes, what comes around turns around. In 1981 Roger Scruton published an essay in *Critical Enquiry* on Photography and Representation and like Walter Benjamin before him he discussed both photography and film.¹² Working from the notion of an »ideal photograph«, an ideal based on the essential differences between painting and photography, Scruton came to the conclusion that photography cannot be an art form:

In looking at an ideal photograph, we know that we are seeing something which actually occurred and seeing it as it appeared. Typically, therefore, our attitude toward photography will be one of curiosity, not curiosity about the photograph but rather about its subject. The photograph addresses itself to our desire for knowledge of the world, knowledge of how things look or seem. The photograph is a means to the end of seeing its subject; in painting, on the other hand, the subject is the means to its own representation.¹³

One way of looking at this conclusion is to say that it is massively naive. Classic photography, meaning photography of the photographers' kind, is an art because of the distinctive qualities of vision it embodies in looking at the world. This is not simply a matter of making the world look beautiful, as Scruton might hold, but also a matter of capturing something which might have escaped the ordinary spectator's attention. Quite apart from the specific qualities which attach to a well produced print, qualities which are shared by other graphic arts, a good photograph is a product of the photographer's vision. Not just vision in the literal sense, but vision in the metaphorical sense as well. It is a vision which offers us a grip on our lives and our experience of the world. But this is not the art institutional way to deal with Scruton. One only needs to point out that in 1981 the art world is a different place from what it was in 1857.

It is extremely difficult to maintain after Duchamp and the adventures of modernism, not to say postmodernism, that arguments about the similarities or differences between painting and photography carry any weight in debates about Art any more. The argument is more, now, about what the photographer brings to the creation of an image and the critic bring to its appreciation. If the photographer chooses to work in a gallery or museum environment there are tacit understandings of the issues and practices which may be addressed. Alternatively, the photographer may simply choose to opt

¹² Roger Scruton, »Photography and Representation«, *Critical Enquiry* 7 (1981) reprinted in *The Aesthetic Understanding*, Manchester 1983.

¹³ *Ibid*, p. 114.

out altogether and simply be as successful as possible in practicing the trade. The rewards are different.

This situation is not particularly new. In the earliest days of photography there were practitioners who celebrated its existence as an industry and pursued its potential mass appeal. There were others who wanted to remain exclusive and not get involved in the tedious business of commerce; their ambition was to produce art. The difference between art and commerce was defined in terms of a difference between an appeal to an élite and an appeal to the mass. This is a view now shared by Roger Scruton. He has argued that it is precisely because the masses can make photographs, photography cannot be an art:

the ability to create, to appreciate, to resonate – the ability to stand back from the world and record its meaning in an aesthetic judgement – is the property of the few.¹⁴

He has failed to recognise that it has been by strategies of curatorship and criticism that photography has, actually, become an art form.

¹⁴ Roger Scruton, »But is it Art?«, *Modern Painters* 2 (1), Spring 1989, p. 65.

Ernest Ženko
Modern Artist and his Space: László Moholy-Nagy

1 Introduction

The word »space« does not necessary have a strictly geometrical meaning, i.e. it does not always represent the idea of an empty area. Space considered in isolation is an empty abstraction, but although in one sense this »substance« is hard to conceive of, it is also true that we cannot avoid its »existence«.

Every period in human culture has developed a spatial conception. If we ignore geometry as a direct means for depicting space, one of the powerful methods of explaining space is its articulation. On this basis it can be said that in contrast to »real« space, articulated space is a reality in our sensory experience, i.e. a reality that can be grasped according to its own laws.

In the light of these considerations the evolution and development of modern art can also be recognised in terms of articulated space. Moreover, each modernist artist has been desperately seeking his own vision of space articulation.

Within this framework the Hungarian avant-garde artist László Moholy-Nagy was one of the most versatile. He worked in several media and joined collaborative enterprises rather than being a specialist in just one. His space conception originated mainly through his use of new materials and constructions introduced by the technological revolution.

In this paper I intend to show how his concepts of space are linked with some major ideas of modern physical space and where and how those ideas are presented in some of his art-works.

2 Modern Physical Space

The physical concept of space (and of what is happening »inside it«) actually appeared in the first two decades of the 20th century, mostly through the ideas of Albert Einstein. So-called »modern« physical space differs a great deal from the concept developed by Isaac Newton in *Philosophiae naturalis principia mathematica*. In this monumental work Newton tried to show the very

nature of movement as elegantly as he could; the movement that occurs in an empty space (the fact that movement requires space was already known to the Greek atomists). Nevertheless Newton's space has nothing to do with common sense – quite opposite: it is the identity of an absolute, true and mathematical entity; the absolute and infinite stage according to which all material bodies (or particles) are moving, and in which the forces between them are exerted.¹

The first difference between this mechanistic view and the contemporary one is shown in the way that forces are described. In the first picture the forces are central, that is, the direction of the force always lies on a straight line between the centres of two material particles (which can be either attracted or repelled) and are independent of particle velocities. All bodies around us are systems of such infinitely small particles, whereas those forces on the micro level can be simply summarized into the macro force of a rigid body (e.g. the gravitational force between Earth and Moon).

In the modern picture, the situation is different. In the second half of the 19th century, new concepts appeared in connection with problems in understanding electric and magnetic phenomena. As Einstein put it: »In physics a new idea has risen, the most important thought after Newton: the field.«² To determine the force radiating from a certain mass or charged particle, it is not needed to know the location of all hypothetical bodies around it. We fill empty space with force-lines that show the direction of the force (which is always perpendicular to each force-line) and also its strength (the density of the force-lines is proportional to the force strength). Not material particles or electrical charges, but the space between them is what it matters.

The idea of the field helped physicists to solve the problems of electromagnetic and optic phenomena, and has led Einstein to formulate his *Theory of relativity*. There are actually two theories. The first, *special*,³ is based on the special relativistic principle: all coordinate systems, moving one upon another uniformly in a straight line, are equal.⁴ (This is equally suitable for

¹ We are dealing here with two different concepts of space, e. g. Newton's and Einstein's, but we should not forget that those two scientists were not alone. There were so many others who can't be even mentioned here, even though their ideas are of great importance for an understanding of nature and space.

² Albert Einstein, Leopold Infeld, *Die Evolution der Physik von Newton bis zur Quantentheorie*, Rowohlt, Hamburg 1956. (Slovenian transl., MK, Ljubljana 1961, p. 174.)

³ Albert Einstein, *Zur Elektrodynamik bewegter Körper*, Ann. der Physik 17, 1905.

⁴ The second theory, *general relativity*, deals with the problem of gravitation. Here Einstein finally left the realm of Euclidean geometry and turned to mathematical structures developed previously by Georg Riemann. (See: Albert Einstein, *Die Grundlagen der allgemeinen Relativitätstheorie*, Leipzig 1916.) This theory is not our concern now.

the description of natural phenomena.) This means that there can be no difference between events occurring in the same place (space) or at the same time, and others, because there is simply no such – absolute – space or time.

The form of space that Einstein used in this case is actually a combination of space in time, named *space-time*. It is a structure, invented by Hermann Minkowski, in which physical events are defined by four dimensions (three spatial coordinates plus time). Time has been present in physics from Greek times onwards because it is impossible to imagine movement in space without time. But in spite of that, this was the first instance, that time found its place within geometry. Space-time simply means that time has become a formally equal coordinate and that distances between (four-dimensional) events are measured in terms of space and time inseparably.

We should mention another important and influential property of modern space that is not directly linked with its geometrical meaning. Namely the kind of transparency of bodies, or better of matter occupying space. In 1895 Wilhelm Röntgen discovered X-rays that opened another dimension of space – a space inside of solid bodies, where, in the classical picture, there should be no space at all.

And yet another one: in 1911 Ernest Rutherford published his theory, inspired by previous experiments (the scattering of alpha particles on thin golden leaves). He introduced the concept of the atom that consists mostly of empty space. In this picture, a very small nucleus is positioned at the centre of an atom (ten thousand times smaller than the atom itself) with electrons moving around the nucleus in circles like planets around the sun. If a material substance consists of such atoms, all the things around us are mostly made of empty space.

Now we can try to find out how those modern ideas of space are connected with conceptions developed by a modernist artist – László Moholy-Nagy. Let us follow some of his ideas of space through his artistic life.

3 Modern Artistic Space

László Moholy-Nagy was born on 20 July 1895 in Bácsborsod, Hungary. When he was sent to secondary school in Szeged, he developed close relations with some poets and writers, which probably explains why his first interest was in literature. After matriculation in 1913, he registered as a law student in Budapest. But it didn't last long – in 1914 he was called up in the army and sent to the front. In this quite specific situation he started to draw. His naturalistic figures of military life on postcards reveal his lack of educa-

tion in drawing, but also his artistic talent. Wounded in 1917, he became even more serious about painting during his recuperation in Odessa. The young man who, until then, drew postcards as a mere pastime, was now depicting the tired, haggard faces of his fellow soldiers. It was there, in the military hospital that Moholy-Nagy matured into a real artist.

After he returned from the front he became increasingly attracted to Hungarian Activists. Social ideas of this avant-garde movement left their impression on his entire work (e.g. the ideal of »synthetic« art – art in the service of society and conducive to man's external and internal liberation). After the fall of the Republic of Councils Moholy-Nagy left the country. First he went to Vienna and then in 1920 he finally settled in Berlin.

3.1 Realistic Portraits

During his period of wandering, Moholy-Nagy began to paint realistic portraits. These represent his own particular mode of expression even though he had not yet found his own individual style. His representational period was short but important for his future career, which led him to a more abstract mode of expression.

The first discovery, which he regarded as his own, was that of line, and the result of this discovery was a series of portraits in which Moholy-Nagy sought not to copy other painters, but to understand them. Later he wrote in his autobiographical essay: »Through my 'problem' of expressing everything with lines I underwent an exciting experience, especially as I overemphasized the lines. In trying to express three-dimensionality, I used auxiliary lines in places where ordinarily no lines are used. The result was a complicated network of a peculiar spatial quality, applicable to new problems. For example, I could express with such a network the spherical roundness of the sky, like the inside of a ball [...]. The drawings became a rhythmically articulated network of lines, *showing not so much objects as my excitement about them.*«⁵

Moholy-Nagy was lost in the world of modern art and decided to return to the Renaissance, to the period of solid values. Thereafter he studied the drawings of Rembrandt and Van Gogh, where he realised that lines ought not to be mixed with half tones, and that: »[...] one should try to express a three-dimensional plastic quality by the unadulterated means of line; that the quality of a picture is not so much defined by the illusionistic rendering of nature as by the faithful use of the medium in new visual relations.«⁶

⁵ László Moholy-Nagy, *The New Vision: From Material to Architecture. Abstract of an Artist*, Wittenborn, Schultz, New York 1947, in: Krisztina Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, Thames and Hudson, London 1985, p. 361.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 360.

Objects are not those which carry the meaning, but the way in which the lines are organised and the relations between them. In the works of other artists – Lajos Tihayi, Edvard Munch, Oskar Kokoschka, Egon Schiele, and Franz Marz – he learned that they regarded nature only as the point of departure. The real meaning lay in their interpretative power. Moholy-Nagy's understanding of this fact resulted at first in his realistic portraits.

His free and energetic lines form complicated networks and they are not drawn to create only a decorative effect. These lines actually scan the surface of the model, the facial wrinkles – curls of the hair, wrinkles of the chin. The understanding of line that Moholy-Nagy adopted was the result of a rational analysis – the line appeared as the basic picture element. Lines that form and construct realistic portraits have become force lines, organised into a diagram of inner forces sharing the emotional charge.

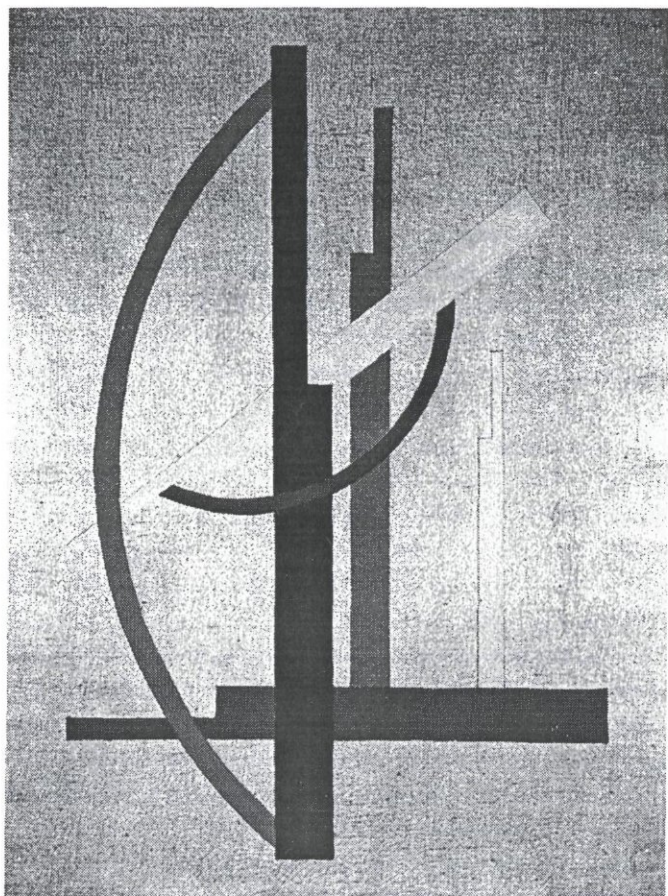
3.2 Glass Architecture

In years 1920-21, although still painting representational pictures, Moholy-Nagy was greatly concerned with achieving a more abstract mode of expression. Berlin was at that time an important avant-garde centre and influenced the young artist in various ways. The two basic influences were those of Berlin Dada and Constructivism, the particular atmosphere of the big city – the industrial landscape, presence of machines, bridges, railway stations, etc. was also very important to him. The industrial civilisation that Moholy-Nagy met in Berlin offered new aesthetic ideals that differed from traditional ones. With the support of avant-garde trends, he adjusted to the new situation and started to explore.

»On my walks I found scrap machine parts, screws, bolts, mechanical devices. I fastened, glued and nailed them wooden boards, combined with drawings and painting. It seemed to me that in this way I could produce real spatial articulation, frontally and in profile, as well as more intense colour effects. Light falling on the actual objects in the construction made the colours appear more alive than any painted combination. I planned three-dimensional assemblages, constructions, executed in glass and metal. Flooded with light, I thought they would bring to the fore the most powerful colour harmonies. In trying to sketch this type of 'glass architecture', I hit upon the idea of transparency.«⁷

Glass architecture appeared as an attempt to paint real objects, seen or found on his wanderings through the land of technology. There he encountered three fundamental ideas that occupied him for the rest of his life: light, space and transparency. His paintings from the years 1920-21 reflect the

⁷ Ibid., p. 362.



Picture 1: *Glass Architecture III*

atmosphere of the big city: railways, bridges, and machines. He named them simply: *Bridges*, *Large Railway Painting*, *The Great Wheel*, and so on. Besides the dynamism of machines and the magical attraction of technology, Moholy-Nagy also discovered the new laws of picture construction.

In 1921 his paintings were concentric, expansive and tending outwards. They were mostly symmetric, with the centre of gravity in the middle plane. The importance of the central area was enhanced with the bare canvas. The brightly coloured, sharply outlined motif stands out against the impersonal light ochre texture of the canvas – it has almost nothing in common with the background. The composition is always centred, sometimes a strong horizontal axis lies in the lower or upper third of the picture. Upward-inclining diagonals float freely in the picture space, not extending as far as the

frame, giving an impression of incompleteness, which is the source of inner tension and dynamism of the picture.

Later, in 1921-22, the whole structure moved out of the horizontal, turned in relation to the lower frame of the picture and aligned with the diagonals. With this change, the earlier balance was disturbed and the motifs, freed from their horizontal attraction, started to soar into the space at their disposal on the surface of the canvas. Different geometrical forms were no longer impenetrable units but transparent elements through which other elements appeared. Through different layers, conveying picture elements, an almost infinite depth of the pictorial space appeared. (Picture 1; *Glass Architecture III*, 1921-22)

The space of the picture had changed completely – the earlier plain canvas background, which contrasted sharply with the motifs, now became a vital component in the whole composition. The background (earlier: empty space) intermingled with motifs (earlier: elements of the picture), one appearing through the other. This was the birth of *Glass Architecture*, the artist's own pictorial world.

In fact, glass architecture had two different meanings for Moholy-Nagy. On the one hand, it was a composition that was very close to the »pictorial« architecture (*Bildarchitektur*) of the Hungarian avant-garde, and on the other, an abstract symbol that was linked to the ideology of the Bauhaus at its outset. This ideology can be clearly recognised in »The Bauhaus Manifesto«, written by Gropius himself: »The ultimate aim of all creative activity is the building! [...] Architects, painters, *sculptors*, we must all return to crafts! [...] There is no essential difference between the artist and the craftsman. The artist is an exalted craftsman. [...] Let us therefore create a new guild of craftsmen without the class-distinctions that raise an arrogant barrier between craftsman and artist! Let us together desire, conceive and create the new building of the future, which will combine everything – architecture and sculpture and painting – in a single form which will one day rise towards the heavens from the hands of a million workers as the crystalline symbol of a new and coming faith.«⁸

This is probably also the reason (or one of the reasons) why Walter Gropius invited Moholy-Nagy to teach in his school of design in Weimar. He started to teach there in April 1923 at the age of only 27. He replaced Johannes Itten in the Preliminary Course and Paul Klee in the Metal Workshop. This was the time when the school had just gone through one of its crises. The main problem was the idealistic, romantic attitude of the

⁸ Walter Gropius, »The Bauhaus Manifesto« in Frank Whitford, *Bauhaus*, Thames and Hudson, London 1995, p. 202.

Bauhaus. Vilmos Huszar wrote in September 1922: »Where is there any attempt to unify several disciplines, at the unified combination of space, form and colour? Pictures, nothing but pictures [...].«⁹

Moholy-Nagy's appointment provided clear evidence that Gropius had changed his mind about the kind of institution Bauhaus ought to be. He announced this in a public lecture during the Bauhaus exhibition in 1923 on the theme »Art and technology, a new unity«. If in the early years the emphasis was placed on the investigation of properties common to all the arts and on the revival of craftsmanship, it had now shifted towards the education of a new designer capable of conceiving artefacts to be made by machine. And if other teachers like Wassily Kandinsky wanted nothing to do with it, for Moholy-Nagy the machine was a kind of fetish.

Moholy-Nagy was a brilliant teacher, and his abilities may have caused resentment among those colleagues whose relationship with the students was problematic. But what really was a problem for most of the other Bauhaus teachers was Moholy-Nagy's rejection of everything irrational. They were convinced to some degree that art is a spiritual revelation. In Klee's words: art's purpose was to »render the invisible visible«. Moholy-Nagy's ideas were quite different. He once said to Lothar Schreyer (who was another Bauhaus teacher): »You surely don't believe the old fairy-story about the human soul? What is known as the soul is nothing but a function of the human body.«¹⁰

During his Bauhaus period, Moholy-Nagy collaborated with Oskar Schlemmer and others on murals, ballet and stage designs; besides painting he was engaged in photography, film and photograms, light and colour experiments, but he also worked in typography and layout. His ideas were close to that of Gropius and together they planned, edited and designed the fourteen *Bauhausbücher* – Bauhaus books which were an attempt to define avant-garde views.

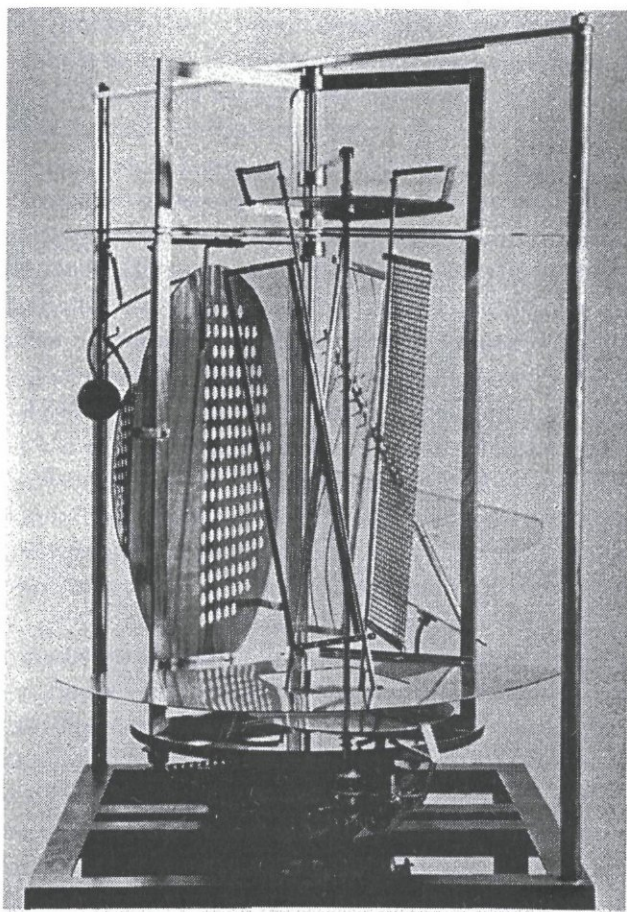
3.3 *Light-Space Modulator*

Moholy-Nagy left Bauhaus in 1928, following Gropius's example. Two years later, Moholy-Nagy finished his masterpiece, *The Light-Space Modulator* (Picture 2), which represents most of the ideas he developed there. »The *Lichtrequisit* (later often referred to in English as the *Light Prop* or *Light Display Machine*) is one of the finest and most clearly expressed creations not only of Moholy-Nagy's individual artistic aspirations, but of avant-garde new aesthetics of the entire period.«¹¹ He started to work on the idea in 1922 and it took eight years for technology to be able to follow the imagination.

⁹ Cited in Frank Whitford, *Bauhaus*, p. 116.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 127.

¹¹ Krisztina Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*, p. 53.



Picture 1: *The Light-Space Modulator*

Machine art was a tendency typical of the Dada movement and Constructivism. Various kinds of work appeared at that time, including Naum Gabo's *Kinetic Statue: Standing Wave* and Moholy-Nagy's own achievement: *Nickel Sculpture*. They are both real machines only partially, in the details, whereas *The Light-Space Modulator* is something different: a real machine metal and glass structure rotating and moving in space.

The basis of the composition is a rotating disc with three metal frames whose edges meet. The oblique glass spiral placed on the disc traverses an inclined glass plate. Three metal screens with oblique axes and of different patterns, as well as two half perforated metal discs, are also in contact with a lower, rotating disc. When the spiral is set in motion by an electric motor, light is projected on the structure. The light passes through the metal screens

whose position, owing to the rotating movement, is constantly changing. The result is the silhouette projected at a distance of two or three metres.

In his remarks Moholy-Nagy wrote about his sculpture: »Light beams overlap as they cross through dense air; they're blocked, diffracted, condensed. The different angles of entering light indicate time. The rotation of light from east to west modulates the visible worlds. Shadows and reflexes register a constantly changing relationship of solids and perforations.«¹²

The *Light-Space Modulator* embodies the idea of the beautiful machine, but it is at the same time (in a broader context) connected with Bauhaus and mostly with its theatrical experiments. The machine was also the embodiment of the Constructivist ideal and Russian Constructivists planned several such works – Vladimir Tatlin's *Monument of the IIIrd International* is regarded as the symbol of the utopia of the entire period, and Naum Gabo's *Plan of a Radio Station* remained a dream. In 1922 Moholy-Nagy published an article together with Alfred Kemeny: »Constructivism means the activation of space by means of a dynamic-constructive system of forces within one another that are actually under tension in physical space, and their construction within space, also active as force (tensions).«¹³

Moholy-Nagy managed to realise his plan and his work became a mobile, spatial variant of glass architecture. He made use of the same geometrical figures as in his paintings, with approximately the same proportion and distribution. In his pictures he sometimes tried to modulate light by saturating the surface and using glass or aluminium instead of canvas. With the *Light-Space Modulator* he could modulate the beam of light in actuality; the result was a mobile painting that started to inspire the artist himself. He adapted it for the stage as »light prop for an electric stage« and he even made a black and white film in which the real subject is the birth of the *Light-Space Modulator*.

4 Conclusion

Dealing with modernism, there is a question of whether one can find any direct connection between notions derived from separated spheres of human activity (like science and art).¹⁴ Ideas seem to remain separated even

¹² Cited in Richard Kostelanetz, *Moholy-Nagy*, Allen Lane, London 1974, p. 160.

¹³ László Moholy-Nagy, Alfred Kemeny, »The Dynamic-Constructive System of Forces«, *Der Sturm*, No. 12/1922; cited in László Moholy-Nagy, *Vision in Motion*, Paul Theobald, Chicago 1965, p. 238.

¹⁴ One of the ideas I wanted to show is the difference between the field of science and the field of art, concerning the development of a concept or notion and personal

if we find them in both spheres and even if they have the same names. One such example is the idea of space-time. We have already mentioned what this idea means in physics. Even though Moholy-Nagy was fully aware of this, for him space-time had a different meaning.

He wrote in his last book, published after his death in 1946:¹⁵ »Since 'space-time' may be a misleading term, it especially has to be emphasized that space-time problems in the arts are not necessarily based upon Einstein's theory of relativity.« He continued with the explanation: »Einstein's terminology of 'space-time' and 'relativity' has been absorbed by our daily language. Whether we use the terms 'space-time', 'motion and speed', or 'vision in motion', rightly or wrongly, they designate a new dynamic and kinetic existence freed from the static, fixed framework of the past. Space-time is not only a matter of natural science or of an aesthetic and emotional interest. It deeply modifies the character of social ends, even beyond the sense that pure science may lead to a better application of our resources.«¹⁶

His own artistic achievements, mentioned in this paper, can be considered as the development of the same idea – namely the idea of space-time. In Moholy-Nagy's realistic portraits, the dynamism of the pictorial space is included in the force-lines forming an emotional field that corresponds to that of a physical force field. In his glass architecture, the artist forcefully expressed the ideas of transparency and light, and the new vision of space, which is very similar to the new physical ideas of the modern time. In the last example of *Light-Space Modulator*, he constructed a machine that finally embodies the concept of modern physical space and time. His explanation and his works of art can be considered an example of how concepts from different spheres – like that of space – can be understood.

development of the artist or scientist (researcher). In the first case, that of science, it is more common to follow the development of an idea and to fill in personal achievements, while in the second case, when dealing with art, it seems more reasonable to follow the life line of an individual artist and to fill in the ideas. The consequence of this idea is also the form of the text.

¹⁵ After he left Bauhaus in 1928, Moholy-Nagy started to wander around Europe looking for a new teaching job. In the meantime, he was painting on synthetic materials and transparencies (Plexiglas), experimenting with colour film, design, photograph and so on. In 1937 he was offered and accepted the directorship of the New Bauhaus in Chicago, but the school was forced to close down before the end of the year, so he opened his own School of Design the following year. Moholy-Nagy died of leukemia in Chicago on 24 November, 1946. At the time of his death he was President of the Institute of Design, then having 680 students.

¹⁶ László Moholy-Nagy, *Vision in Motion*, p. 266.

Sven Arntzen
Natural Beauty, Ethics and Conceptions of Nature

The question I will address is: To what extent, and in what sense, can natural beauty help establish ethical constraints on our treatment of the natural environment? I will assume for my discussion that natural beauty is something real or objective.¹ A question central to my discussion, but whose answer I will largely take for granted, concerns the marks of natural beauty, the characteristics that a natural region must possess in order to be beautiful. It seems to me that one such characteristic is complex order. This implies that the candidate for natural beauty must be a whole of integrated parts. The beauty of a natural region must require natural biological diversity, although the degree of such diversity, and of complexity, will vary with location and climate. As these remarks suggest, the focus of my discussion will be the beauty of nature or a natural region, not that of individual things. Accordingly, the ethic based on natural beauty as I will discuss it will be concerned with the treatment of nature or a natural region as a whole.

I. Natural Beauty and Preservation of Nature

It is not unusual in literature on environmental ethics to maintain that the aesthetic appreciation of nature can help establish ethical constraints on human actions affecting nature. Aldo Leopold sees natural beauty as one criterion of ethics when he formulates the principle of his land ethic as »A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.«² Eugene Hargrove thinks that the failure among ancient Greek philosophers to locate beauty in the natural environment helps explain their lack of concern for that environment.³

¹ For a discussion of this issue and its relevance to environmental ethics, see for example Eugene C. Hargrove, *Foundations of Environmental Ethics* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.:Prentice Hall, 1988), Ch. 6.

² Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac. And Sketches Here and There* (New York:Oxford University Press, 1949), pp. 224-25.

³ Eugene C. Hargrove, op. cit., pp. 26-29.

According to him, an argument establishing an ethical requirement concerning the preservation of nature or some part of it can be based on its beauty in much the same way in which one can argue from the beauty of a work of art to the necessity of its preservation.⁴ To the extent a work of art is beautiful and recognized as such, it is thought to possess a value which is independent of its being useful to obtain some extraneous goal. For example, the appreciation of a painting as beautiful does not involve a consideration of the economic benefits one might derive from owning it and then selling it. The beauty of the painting is considered an intrinsic value, a value that ought to be preserved for its own sake. The beauty of a work of art requires that the object be preserved in its current state and that, in case of damage, it be restored to its original state. Hargrove and others use similar considerations to argue that we have a duty to preserve the natural environment or parts of it.⁵ Natural beauty is a non-instrumental, intrinsic value which is lost in the case of drastic change. Furthermore, if, as positive aesthetics claims,⁶ beauty is something original to a natural region and nature unaffected by humans has no negative aesthetic characteristics, then the beauty of a natural region makes it a candidate for preservation in a condition in which it is unaffected by humans. With the additional premise that natural beauty is superior to the beauty of art,⁷ the argument is that we ought to preserve a natural region in its original condition because it is beautiful in that condition, and this beauty is a value which somehow exceeds the beauty of objects made by humans.

This argument, the so-called »preservation argument«, calls for the exclusion of all human activity from the natural environment, with the possible exception of low-impact recreational activities. Underlying the argument is a dualistic view of man and nature: man and nature are essentially distinct; all or most human activity is detrimental to the natural environment and its beauty. Hargrove makes this supposition explicit: »In defending natural beauty and biodiversity, it is essential that the argument be developed in terms of a human-nature relationship in which humans are not part of nature, in which nature is viewed as an other.«⁸ Western approaches to

⁴ Eugene C. Hargrove, »The Paradox of Humanity: Two views of biodiversity and landscapes«, in KeChung Kim & Robert D. Weaver (eds.), *Biodiversity and Landscapes: A Paradox of Humanity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 173-185. See also his *Foundations of Environmental Ethics*, Ch. 6, esp. pp. 191-98.

⁵ See for example Robin Attfield, *Environmental Philosophy: Principles and Prospects* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1994), pp. 183-202, esp. pp. 197-201.

⁶ For an account of positive aesthetics, see Allen Carlson, »Nature and Positive Aesthetics«, *Environmental Ethics* 6 (1984), pp. 5-34.

⁷ See Hargrove, op. cit., pp. 185-191.

⁸ Hargrove, *ibid.*, p. 183.

nature traditionally fall into either of two extremes, both of which presuppose a duality of man and nature. One is the drastic transformation of nature, which has resulted in to-day's environmental crisis. Man obviously regards himself as essentially distinct from that which he destroys or drastically alters. The other is the protection and preservation of natural areas to the exclusion of all activity designed to meet the needs of human life. The preservation argument is, then, an attempt to justify the latter. It seeks to establish an ethical requirement that one refrain from using undisturbed natural regions or ecosystems and that one restore some areas that have been taken out of their pristine condition through human activity. Understood in this manner, the argument is indifferent to what humans do or how humans live outside natural areas, provided their activities do not adversely affect such areas, e.g. through the use of fossil fuels with the resulting pollution and climate change. In other words, the argument is not so much concerned with human lifestyles as with the confinement of human life and activity to certain locations or regions. The ethic that this argument is designed to support does not call for the integration of human life and activity with the natural environment.

The approach to nature supported by the preservation argument differs from what can be loosely characterized as sustainable uses of nature, an approach to the natural environment that takes a middle course somewhere between the two traditional extremes. According to Arne Næss, ecological sustainability in what he calls the »wide sense« ensures the richness and diversity of life forms on Earth.⁹ In accordance with this conception of sustainability, sustainable uses of nature can be understood as practices and activities that help meet the needs of human life, yet are consistent with nature's own requirements for its continued existence as an intricate web of diverse, interdependent things. Here, one might think of humans as somehow living and acting *in* nature, in conformity with nature's own conditions. Can considerations of natural beauty support this middle course and help establish an ethic requiring sustainable uses of the natural environment?

The preservation argument is weakened by the fact that there is an essential difference between art and nature, which in turn affects the conditions under which each is beautiful. A work of art is in and of itself static.

⁹ Arne Næss, »Deep Ecology for the Twenty-second Century«, in George Sessions (ed.), *Deep Ecology for the Twenty-first Century* (Boston & London:Shambhala, 1995), p. 464. Contrasted with sustainability in the wide sense is »narrow«, or perhaps »shallow«, ecological sustainability, which for Næss consists of »the existence of short- and long-range policies that most researchers agree will make ecological *catastrophes* affecting narrow *human* interests unlikely.«

The goal of its preservation is to make its beauty permanent, to protect its beauty from externally caused change. Nature, on the other hand, is dynamic; ecologists and geologists have emphasized the fundamentally dynamic character of natural processes.¹⁰ If positive aesthetics is assumed, this means that natural beauty is not adverse to change, but must itself be considered dynamic. Natural change, for example the gradual draining and eventual elimination of a beautiful lake or the natural destruction of a beautiful forest, is compatible with natural beauty. Natural beauty cannot be made permanent in the manner in which the beauty of a work of art is made permanent through restoration and protection. In a recent article, Keekok Lee discusses the measures of the National Trust in England's Lake District to restore and protect Yew Tree Tarn from destruction caused by geological processes, in order to make its beauty permanent.¹¹ However, such a measure amounts to the sort of interference with nature which the proponents of the preservation argument want to reject.

Given its dynamic character, natural beauty cannot support natural preservation in the sense of maintaining a natural region in its present state. Rather, as a foundation for environmental ethics, natural beauty would dictate that natural processes be allowed to run their course, on nature's own terms. Does this preclude all uses of nature for productive purposes to meet the needs of human life? Leopold distinguishes between evolutionary, natural change, and the sort of change humans are capable of affecting by means of advanced technology. Natural change is usually slow or local; anthropogenic change, using advanced technology, can be swift and global.¹² Using the distinction, one can perhaps say that acting and living in a manner consistent with natural beauty involves maintaining the human impact on nature at the level or scale of nature's own changes and processes, slow or local. Natural beauty allows for human uses of nature insofar as those uses are no more than forms of participation in nature's own dynamic processes.

¹⁰ For a discussion of recent ecology's view of the dynamic character of natural processes, see J. Baird Callicott, »Do Deconstructive Ecology and Sociobiology Undermine Leopold's Land Ethic?«, *Environmental Ethics* 18 (1996), pp. 353-372; Donald Worster, »The Ecology of Order and Chaos«, in Worster, *The Wealth of Nature* (New York:Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 157-170.

¹¹ Keekok Lee, »Beauty for Ever?«, *Environmental Values* 4 (1995), pp. 213-225.

¹² Ibid., pp. 216-217; cf. Callicott, op.cit., pp. 369-372. Callicott expresses the distinction in terms of the ecological concept of scale, a concept which is both temporal and spatial.

II. Conceptions of Nature

Some ecologists and environmental philosophers view nature or an ecosystem either as an organism or as a community.¹³ In either case, nature is regarded as a complex orderly whole, being in some sense self-determining. It was suggested earlier that nature or a natural region is not beautiful unless it is a complex orderly whole. However, the normative implications of natural beauty and the status that humans are regarded as having with respect to nature will vary, depending on whether nature is viewed as an organism or as a community, respectively.

It follows from the view of nature as an organism that the whole of nature or of an ecosystem is regarded as having primacy in relation to natural individuals and species. Since the parts, like the organs, are considered significant or valuable only as they contribute to the whole or its well-being, the parts of nature, such as its species and individual organisms, do not have independent status or value apart from the whole. The beauty of nature viewed as an organism seems unproblematic. An individual organism can be considered beautiful and can be said to retain its beauty through the course of its development. On the other hand, the organism view has implications which may be unacceptable, or at least problematic. Since any value of the part of an organism depends on its function within the whole, it is difficult to say of a natural individual that it is beautiful in its own right, independently of its contribution to the natural whole. Yet, many nature lovers seem to find beauty in individual plants and animals as such. Another implication concerns the status of humans with respect to the natural whole. If one holds a monist view of man and nature, considering man as part of nature, then the human individual and the human species cannot be regarded as having a status or value independently of their being part of the whole. Thus, one cannot make sense of the worth or dignity of the human individual or of humanity.¹⁴ Furthermore, one cannot claim autonomy or moral responsibility for human persons or groups of persons, for every human action is considered part of the organic process. In other words, viewing the human being as part of nature conceived as an organism is incompatible with the status of the human person as a moral agent. Here, a monist

¹³ Leopold and Næss tend to view nature or ecosystems according to a community conception. Lovelock's »Gaia hypothesis« is a version of the organism view. For a discussion of these as two alternative, competing holistic models of nature, see Eric Katz, »Organism, Community, and the 'Substitution Problem'«, in Katz, *Nature as Subject* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1997), pp. 33-52.

¹⁴ In my view, the idea of human dignity or worth is too fundamental to ethical and legal thinking to be summarily dismissed.

view of man and nature, in undermining the idea of morality altogether, rules out natural beauty as a foundation for moral obligation with respect to the natural environment.

The alternative, given the organism view, is to maintain a dualistic view of man and nature. If the human being is not part of the natural whole, viewed as an organism, it is possible to maintain that the human being has independent status and value, and that he has moral responsibility and so, as a moral agent, is subject to moral obligation. And it makes sense to consider human activity as something distinct from and capable of being contrary to natural processes and to pass ethical judgment on human actions accordingly. Environmental ethics based on natural beauty, where nature is conceived as an organism, supposes that the human being is essentially distinct and separate from nature. In that case, natural beauty imposes on humans the obligation to refrain from interfering with that from which they are essentially distinct. This is in agreement with the preservation argument.

An alternative to the organism view is the view of nature or an ecosystem as a community. For characteristics of community, one often looks to human communities: the association of people under some political authority, religious communities, communities based on some core activity or business such as a fishing community, and so on. Since nature or an ecosystem is not characterized by the kind of cooperation and mutual obligation that one finds in human communities, it must be considered sufficient for a natural community that its members interact and influence one another and that they share in the same fundamental conditions of existence and life.¹⁵ Even if the members of one species prey on those of another, this is necessary for the thriving of the animals that survive, and they do so under related conditions. The community view of nature supposes that natural things in their great diversity are somehow connected. However, a community is a looser association of things than an organism. A community member may have a significant function with respect to the whole and yet have independent status or value. When contrasting the community view of nature with the organism view, Eric Katz uses a university as an example of community to make this point.¹⁶ Students, faculty and staff who are essential to the university community also have lives and activities apart from it.

¹⁵ John Passmore, *Man's Responsibility for Nature* (New York: Scribner, 1974), p. 116, objects to the community view of nature on the grounds that it is a necessary condition for there being a community that those who count as its members recognize mutual obligations. As Callicott points out in his *In Defense of the Land Ethic. Essays in Environmental Philosophy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), p. 71, a community view of nature must reject Passmore's condition.

¹⁶ Katz, op. cit., pp. 57-58.

If these characterizations of community and community members are correct, then this view of nature does not have the problematic implications of the organism view. It allows for the individual thing in nature to be considered beautiful in its own right, and not only in terms of its function within the whole. This view also allows for a monist view of the relationship of man and nature, according to which humans are members of the natural community, without relinquishing the view of the human person as valuable and as morally responsible. Leopold regards human membership in the natural community as a presupposition of his land ethic. He construes the evolution of ethics as a gradual development from its concern with the relation of one individual to another, through a concern with the relation of the individual to society to a concern with humans' relation to the land and the things living on it, i.e., the land ethic.¹⁷ According to him, the last stage will be a reality when humans, as moral agents, view land as a community to which they belong, together with all other living things.¹⁸ For Leopold, the human person is not prepared to follow an ethic based on natural beauty unless he realizes that he is a member of a natural community.

III. Natural Beauty, Place and Landscape

One problem with the community view and the idea of natural beauty is that a community is not the sort of thing that is considered beautiful. Whereas it makes sense to speak of nature as a »beautiful organism«, it is not so obvious that it makes sense to characterize nature as a »beautiful community.« If natural beauty can justify an ethic concerning humans' relationship to the natural environment, the question is how this is so, when the community view of nature is presupposed. One reason why a community is not the sort of thing that is considered beautiful is that it is not a mere aggregate of its members. A community also involves the complex relationships of its members and the conditions of their coexistence. Such relationships and conditions are grasped intellectually; they are not directly perceived but inferred from what is perceived. Writers on natural aesthetics generally agree that perceptual qualities of natural phenomena are relevant to their being beautiful or objects of aesthetic appreciation.¹⁹ If a commu-

¹⁷ Leopold, op. cit., pp. 202-203.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. viii.

¹⁹ I make this claim on the basis of writings by people of diverse orientations on natural aesthetics: Arnold Berleant, »The Aesthetics of Art and Nature«, in Salim Kelam & Ivan Gaskell (eds.), *Landscape, Natural Beauty and the Arts* (Cambridge: Cambridge

nity is, at least in part, an intellectually grasped entity, natural beauty must pertain to perceptual aspects, i.e., what can be seen, heard, felt, etc., of the natural community.

As objects of perception, it is typically uniquely identifiable particulars that are considered beautiful: individual animals, particular places and landscapes. Perhaps one can also say that the beauty of a particular natural phenomenon is as unique as the particular itself. If positive aesthetics is true, two natural landscapes, similar or dissimilar, are both beautiful and therefore of equal aesthetic value. Yet, each is beautiful in its particular manner, by virtue of its unique character, so that the beauty of one is not exchangeable for the beauty of the other. The elimination of one landscape would then be an absolute, irreplaceable, loss. A place, landscape or natural region is dependent for its beauty on the kinds of plants and animals and types of soil and rocks that are natural to it. Callicott, with reference to Leopold, suggests that certain species of plants and animals might be more central to the beauty of a region than others, such as the ruffed grouse in the north woods of Wisconsin and the alligator in the Louisiana swamps. He calls these »aesthetic indicator species«.²⁰ Since, as ecology tells us, an ecosystem is an intricate web of interdependent things, the aesthetic indicator species require their supporting species and phenomena. The unique beauty and character of a natural area requires the presence of all the species of plants and animals and all the soil and rock types that are natural or original to it.

Human communities were originally attached to specific places or regions, whose conditions were central to the determination of the individual character of the community. A small fishing village at a particular coastal location has its character to a great extent determined by the conditions of that particular location: the presence of certain species of fish, prevailing weather conditions, soil conditions, the surrounding landscape such as the presence or absence of forests nearby, the proximity to other villages, the topography, and so on. And for its survival, the community has organized its activities so as to be in agreement with the natural conditions of its location. A natural community is similar in that it too is attached to a certain place and region, whose peculiar conditions and characteristics help determine its unique character, including the diversity and relationships of its mem-

University Press, 1993), pp. 228-243; Emily Brady, »Imagination and the Aesthetic Appreciation of Nature«, *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 56 (1998), pp. 139-147; J. Baird Callicott, »The Land Aesthetic«, in Callicott (ed.), *Companion to 'A Sand County Almanac'. Interpretive and Critical Essays* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), pp. 157-171.

²⁰ Callicott, »The Land Aesthetic«, pp. 166-167; cf. Leopold, op.cit., pp.137-138.

bers. A particular place, landscape or region possesses diverse perceptual qualities, and it is a complex orderly whole. Thus, a place, landscape or region satisfies at least some of the conditions for possessing natural beauty. It is reasonable to think, then that if nature is viewed as a community, natural beauty pertains to the place, landscape or region in which the community is located.

According to dynamic ecology, a place in nature or a natural landscape has a history which accounts for its unique character. As such, every place or region embodies its distinctive narrative, a story of its developmental stages and their significance. The story is about the reciprocal influence of resident species and the places and regions in which they are located. Humans can relate to such a narrative in either of two ways. They have the capacity to disrupt the narrative so as to discontinue it, or they can, through their actions, continue the narrative. Neither Næss' deep ecology nor Leopold's land ethic prohibits human habitation in and interaction with nature. According to Næss, human activities or human habitation need not be incompatible with wilderness; only certain lifestyles are, especially those of Western industrial people.²¹ And according to Leopold, the land ethic does not oppose human activity in the natural environment, only the destruction of this environment.²² Indeed, a truly holistic ethic of nature, which seeks to integrate humans in the natural whole, cannot prohibit human uses of nature, provided these uses are sustainable in the relevant sense and are confined in scope so as to be in conformity with nature's original processes. The idea of natural beauty can help support these ethical constraints on human activity in nature.

If, as positive aesthetics holds, a place or landscape is naturally or originally beautiful, and, as dynamic ecology holds, it is subject to continuous processes or evolutionary changes, the results of which are also beautiful, then natural beauty requires of humans that they conduct their lives in a manner which is consistent with nature's own processes. In other words, anthropogenic changes, which are inevitable, given the presence of humans on Earth, must be such that they do not upset nature's own course. Human activity must be governed by a concern for the particular place or landscape where the natural community is located. For example, forestry practices must be determined according to the character of the place, such as its topography, soil conditions, living conditions of resident species, and so on. A road built in hilly country must be narrow and winding. Farming practices must

²¹ Næss, »The Third World, Wilderness, and Deep Ecology«, in George Sessions (ed.), *Deep Ecology for the Twenty-first Century*, p. 398.

²² Leopold, *op.cit.*, p. 204.

leave habitat for resident species, although the manner in which this is done will depend on climatic and soil conditions, on what the resident species are, and so on. Since a place or a landscape is like no other, its beauty requires of humans that their activities maintain its uniqueness. Rather than excluding humans from the natural environment, an ethic based on natural beauty in this manner imposes requirements on humans' lifestyles, that human lives and activities be determined by the character of the place or landscape, rather than the other way around.

According to some proponents of positive aesthetics, the aesthetic appreciation of nature requires scientific knowledge, the knowledge of a region's or landscape's natural history.²³ Such a requirement seems counterintuitive and unreasonable, for it would imply that persons without the prerequisite knowledge of a certain region are incapable of aesthetic appreciation of that region.²⁴ On the other hand, such knowledge is useful, and may even be necessary, for conforming to the requirements imposed by natural beauty. The requirement that human activity be in conformity with nature's own dynamic processes is a requirement that human activity be part of and a continuation of a narrative which is already present as embodied in the natural environment. Knowledge of the history of a place or landscape is relevant to determining what is involved in complying with the ethical requirement.

The place or landscape in which a particular natural community is located is not any place, determinable by means of abstract coordinates alone. Rather, it holds a special significance to that community and its members. Thus, there is a sense in which the place or landscape of a natural community is home to that community and its members. As Edward Casey has pointed out, the idea of home signifies an intimate relationship that a person or group of persons has to a particular place.²⁵ Home is that particular place to which one belongs. It is part of one's identity, and the distinctive character of the home itself comes from one's living in it. Thus conceived, a home is something very different from a house. Whereas one's home is one's dwelling in a fundamental sense, a house is a construction, a distinct other to which one has a merely external relationship. The relation to a place as one's home in this sense is a basis for one's caring for it, making sure it persists in its distinctive existence and significance. Similarly, if the idea of home is applied to the place or region of a natural community, which in-

²³ See for example Allen Carlson, *op.cit.* Callicott attributes a similar view to Leopold, cf. Callicott, »The Land Aesthetic«, pp. 161-166.

²⁴ For an extensive criticism of this view, see for example Emily Brady, *op.cit.*

²⁵ Edward S. Casey, *Getting Back into Place* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993), e.g. pp. 121, 175-77.

cludes humans among its members, it makes sense to extend the same considerations of care to this place or region. The word »ecology« is derived from the ancient Greek words »oikos«, often translated as »home«, and »logos«.²⁶ Accordingly, ecology is the study of the natural home, including the things inhabiting it and the relationships of their interdependence. The natural home has its beauty from all the things that naturally live in it and belong to it. As an intrinsic value, natural beauty requires of the morally capable members of the natural community that they care for the home of all the community's members, that they act so as to enable it to continue to exist with its distinctive character.

IV. Conclusion

In opposition to the preservation argument, I do not think that natural beauty prohibits human uses of nature altogether, when nature or a natural region is viewed as a community of which humans are members. It does not follow, however, that there is no obligation to preserve wilderness areas in various parts of the world. Some of the considerations I have presented can also be used in support of wilderness preservation. Although natural communities or ecosystems are distinguishable entities, they must still be connected. The distinct communities and their respective members must somehow interact or relate to one another across community boundaries, for they all exist in one inescapable world, Earth. Insofar as one can speak of a global natural community, the beauty of nature thus conceived is the beauty of Earth. If positive aesthetics is assumed, then Earth with its original biological diversity is beautiful. If natural beauty is a foundation of an ethic of nature, then such beauty on a global scale implies that humans should not, through drastic interference with natural processes, upset the conditions of Earth's original biological diversity. Failure to preserve various kinds of wilderness would diminish this diversity. Thus, the appeal to natural beauty can support an ethic of nature at the global level as well as at the local or regional level.²⁷

²⁶ For an account of the origin of the word »ecology«, see for example J. Donald Hughes, *Ecology in Ancient Civilizations* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1975), pp. 2-3.

²⁷ I am grateful to Otto M. Christensen for conversations about issues of aesthetics.

Richard Conte
Recherche et création

Qui parle de recherche entre dans le champ des sciences et doit répondre aux objectifs généraux et aux exigences posées aujourd'hui par celles-ci. Il s'agit de donner une description de la réalité dans et par laquelle nous existons, y-compris les êtres vivants et ceci grâce à des lois et des concepts, formulés et forgés par notre cerveau. «Connaître, c'est décrire pour retrouver»¹ et cette description ne doit comporter ni incohérence ni contradiction pour être validée. On doit ainsi pouvoir, par la rigueur d'un dispositif d'expérimentation, reproduire les mêmes effets à partir des mêmes causes². De plus, les sciences, chacune dans leur branche, doivent édifier un savoir objectif et cumulatif que l'expérience s'efforce de légitimer. Pourtant, même s'ils constituent un *gain cognitif*, ces savoirs se trouvent sans cesse questionnés par la recherche en cours jusqu'à provoquer une *crise* des concepts qui existaient auparavant. Ayant un ensemble de vérités consensuelles et évolutives pour objectif de ses investigations, la recherche scientifique suppose que ce qu'elle révèle, possède une réalité en dehors d'elle. Sera donc *chercheur* celui qui tente d'établir des connaissances nouvelles, de produire cette plus-value cognitive, ayant valeur d'universalité dans son champ de référence, et souvent *contre* les certitudes acquises de sa propre spécialité.

Mais les territoires des sciences se présentent avec des statuts variés quant à leur champ d'application et à leurs conséquences pratiques. Contrairement aux sciences humaines, ce que l'on qualifie de sciences de la

¹ G. Bachelard, *Essai sur la connaissance approchée*, Paris, Vrin, sixième édition, 1987, p. 9. Il précise p. 10: «Ce qui pousse souvent à rejeter la description au rang d'une méthode de pis aller, c'est que, dans les sciences plus qu'ailleurs, on est amené à confondre la connaissance telle qu'on la transmet et la connaissance telle qu'on la crée.»

² Dans sa fameuse «Lettre à Léo Ferrero», Valéry note en marge que «la science, au sens moderne du mot, consiste à faire dépendre le savoir du pouvoir; et va jusqu'à subordonner l'intelligible au vérifiable. La confiance repose entièrement sur la certitude de reproduire ou de revoir un certain phénomène moyennant certains actes bien définis. Quant à la manière de décrire ce phénomène, de l'*expliquer*, c'est là la partie muable, discutable, perfectible de l'accroissement ou de l'exposition de la science» *Œuvres*, T. I, Gallimard, p. 1253. De façon plus aphoristique, dans *Moralités*: «Il faut n'appeler *Science*: que l'ensemble des recettes qui réussissent toujours. Tout le reste est littérature.» *Ibid.* T. II, p. 522.

nature s'avère épistémologiquement moins problématique. En effet, quel que soit le moment ou le lieu, un fait d'expérimentation reste valable et si tel n'est pas le cas, c'est qu'une erreur a dû se glisser dans le dispositif ou la procédure, ou bien que les causes ne sont pas tout à fait identiques. Pouvoir reproduire une expérience demeure un critère de base de la mise à l'épreuve scientifique. Ceci ne va pas d'ailleurs sans quelques difficultés aujourd'hui compte tenu de l'extrême sophistication des instruments, de la précision des mesures et du coût des expériences.

De fait, les sciences humaines en modelant (modélisant) peu ou prou leurs méthodes sur celles de l'investigation des sciences de la nature, se heurtent d'emblée à un problème de quantité: le nombre de paramètres à considérer pour la moindre tentative d'expérimentation est immense et la mise en relation de ces paramètres oppose au chercheur un obstacle d'une complexité difficilement appréciable. Cette situation rend l'expérimentation rarement significative. Le mot recherche conserve donc sa force intentionnelle mais perd en efficience quant aux résultats mesurables et à valeur généralisable.

En épistémologie générale, le mot *recherche* recouvre, si on l'applique à la recherche scientifique, dont l'Université est l'un des lieux de prédilection, «un processus par lequel on parvient à un but, plus ou moins bien représenté à l'avance, mais dont on ignore au départ comment l'atteindre. L'idéal est évidemment de posséder une procédure qu'il suffirait d'appliquer pour parvenir au résultat»³. Il s'agit donc de progresser dans la connaissance de tel domaine. Or, tout se complique déjà quand le psychisme humain et sa socialisation sont à eux-mêmes leur propre territoire d'investigation et se retrouvent en quelque sorte juges et parties dans la recherche. Établir des connaissances cumulables en ces domaines n'est pas sans acherper sur de graves difficultés et toutes les sciences «humaines» ne se retrouvent pas à égalité devant la spécificité de leur champ. On peut néanmoins parler de recherche dans ce cas, au moins en ce qui relève de la démarche utilisée, sinon de l'universalité des résultats obtenus. Il n'existe pas, par exemple en histoire, une partition unique des objets culturels en domaines fixes. On sait que la vie d'une culture est d'une telle complexité que nous sommes probablement incapables d'en débrouiller toutes les connexions. Ainsi les descriptions de deux historiens peuvent apparaître comme contradictoires sans pour autant que l'une soit vraie et l'autre fausse car cela dépend de la relativité des connaissances historiques au champ que chacun a

³ *Encyclopédie philosophique universelle*, T. 2, «Les notions philosophiques», Paris, PUF, 1990, art. Recherche.

défini au préalable et du rapport de leurs connaissances à la mobilité fondamentale que constitue l'historicité.

Le *Vocabulaire d'esthétique* considère à l'article *recherche* qu'en effet, le travail du chercheur consiste à «établir de nouvelles connaissances, ou d'obtenir des résultats nouveaux». Le développement mérite d'être cité dans son intégralité car il fait la distinction entre deux cas qui étendent la notion de recherche: «Le premier cas concerne la recherche en esthétique; elle s'apparente à la recherche philosophique ou scientifique, et travaille à mieux connaître tous les objets qu'étudie l'esthétique. Le second concerne la recherche de l'artiste, de l'écrivain, qui essaie des genres ou procédés neufs, ou travaille à découvrir comment réaliser certains effets; elle est souvent moins systématique et plus empirique que la première. Il ne faut pas méconnaître le long travail de recherche qu'exige souvent l'œuvre d'art; certaines œuvres n'ont d'ailleurs pour but que la recherche, en ce sens que ce sont des essais, des tentatives, et non des œuvres ayant leur fin en elles-mêmes»⁴. L'auteur de l'article *surligne* le dessein scientifique de la recherche en esthétique, en posant le principe d'une affinité épistémologique entre la recherche d'ordre philosophique et la recherche scientifique. En revanche, le travail de «recherche» des artistes est tiré du côté de la préparation documentaire et technique, ou de l'expérimentation des procédés, c'est-à-dire vers les tentatives, les essais, etc., sous-entendant une distinction assez nette entre le moment où l'artiste serait un «chercheur» et celui où il entrerait dans la singularité de son œuvre. Ceci suppose une partition par exemple chez le même chercheur / artiste, entre celui qui cherche et celui qui crée, ou chez deux artistes différents dont l'un dirait «je ne trouve pas, je cherche» et l'autre à l'instar de Picasso, «je ne cherche pas, je trouve»!⁵

⁴ Anne Souriau, *Vocabulaire d'esthétique*, Dir. Etienne Souriau, Paris, PUF, 1990, art. *recherche*.

⁵ Jacques Drillon, de façon très documentée, étudie la réciproque solidarité entre «chercher» et «trouver» en ces termes: «'Chercher' est attribut de 'trouver', et 'trouver' l'attribut de 'chercher'. Ils vont ensemble et du même pas.» Les citations qu'il tire du *Dictionnaire des citations* de Pierre Oster (Utilitaires Le Robert) démontrent l'ascendance philologique de la boutade de Picasso, sans parler de la formule de Jésus: «Tu ne me chercherais point si tu ne m'avais déjà trouvé.» Drillon fait remarquer que «Trouver est victime d'une irrésistible dévaluation, au profit du chercher; que l'un et l'autre ont même tendance à échanger leurs significations, ou du moins leurs positions respectives dans le déroulement chronologique. En tout cas, l'homme semble plus grand dans l'effort que dans la récompense.» Jacques Drillon, *Eurêka, Généalogie et sémantique du verbe «trouver»*, Paris, Gallimard, Le promeneur, 1995, pp. 114-117.

En quel sens l'artiste pourrait-il donc être considéré comme chercheur?⁶ Probablement dans celui d'une collecte et d'une quête méthodiques aptes à fonder ou enrichir l'élaboration d'œuvres (études préparatoires, esquisses, réflexions théoriques), d'une préparation expérimentale associée à un projet. Mais c'est justement pour les artistes qui privilégient le *process* que s'emploie le plus souvent aujourd'hui ce terme de «recherche», qui devient presque synonyme d'expérience.⁷ Il y a donc très vite amalgame entre procédure de recherche et processus créateur, qui peuvent opérer comme la chaîne et la trame d'une même œuvre. C'est justement l'un des buts que s'est fixée l'étude des conduites créatrices: démêler ce qui dans l'œuvre en cours concerne une posture de recherche (à visée cognitive) et une posture créatrice (à visée singularisante). Par exemple, les savoirs techniques, les observations autocritiques, ou les documents iconographiques et historiographiques rassemblés par l'artiste au travail, peuvent apporter des connaissances supplémentaires susceptibles de faire progresser, non pas la création de cet artiste en tant que telle, mais les savoirs et savoir-faire qui en sont les ingrédients nécessaires et dont l'artiste peut faire partager l'expérience et même généraliser les résultats.

Quant à ce qui fait «l'exclusivité» de sa création, les saillies plus ou moins ardentes sorties du fond grouillant de la *praxis*, il est bien sûr au centre de l'entreprise poïétique, de «chercher» *autant que faire se peut*, à en éclaircir l'événement par l'avènement⁸. Mais pour l'heure, quand l'artiste réalise une œuvre, peut-on avancer qu'il «recherche»? Ne vaut-il pas mieux dire qu'il «cherche»?⁹ Or cela correspond-t-il à quelque chose dans l'idée que les sciences et l'Université se font de la recherche? Nous savons bien que la

⁶ La réponse à cette question mériterait bien sûr un traitement historique des relations entre *art* et *connaissance* car ces deux notions s'associent ou s'opposent d'une façon toujours éclairante. Cf. Philippe Junod, *Transparence et opacité*, Lausanne, L'Âge d'homme, 1976, pp. 149-151.

⁷ «La distinction (...) entre peintre à clientèle et peintre-chercheur nous apporte ici plus d'un critère de classification, (...). Comme André Lhote nous l'a bien fait sentir, le peintre-chercheur a moins tendance à faire des tableaux que le peintre à clientèle, il fait plutôt des expériences.» René Passeron, *L'œuvre picturale et les fonctions de l'apparence*, Paris, Vrin, sec. éd. 1974, p. 325.

⁸ Comme disait Goethe: «Notre opinion est qu'il sied à l'homme de supposer qu'il y a quelque chose d'inconnaissable, mais qu'il ne doit pas mettre de limite à sa recherche.» cité par Pierre Bourdieu, *Les règles de l'art*, Paris, Seuil, 1992, p. 12.

⁹ «Lorsqu'on cherche, on ne connaît pas exactement ce qu'on cherche. On sait ce qu'on cherche quand on le recherche; (...) La *Cherche* est donc de l'énergie pure, du désir, une appétence, un appel. (...) Ce qu'on cherche, c'est la fin du *Chercher*. C'est précisément la découpe du temps, la borne, le jalon, le bas de la page.» Jacques Drillon, *op. cit.* p. 117.

création artistique même si elle touche à une «vérité humaine», – le singulier et le local peuvent être à vocation universelle – et peut à ce titre être un «moyen de connaissance»¹⁰, ne veut nullement établir des vérités «scientifiques», car c'est par son *existence* et non par ses lois généralisables qu'une œuvre d'art apporte un surcroît de savoir¹¹.

Nous touchons là à un problème litigieux qui est par exemple de déterminer ce qu'on entend par «recherche» dans le domaine des arts plastiques. Mais il faut néanmoins préciser que, même sur leur terrain, et Edgar Morin¹² ou Prigogine¹³ l'ont bien montré, les sciences les plus «dures», ont rencontré dans leur fonctionnement propre, la nécessité de composer avec le hasard, l'incertitude, l'indéterminisme, le pulsionnel et l'esthétique. Il faut une imagination tenace, des efforts infructueux, des essais et erreurs ininterrompus, avant de lancer le fameux *Eurêka!* Il y a aussi dans la recherche scientifique des repentirs, des recyclages, une fécondité par décentrement, bref la faculté d'articuler des connaissances sur un fond de méconnaissance.

¹⁰ Une des thèses couramment avancée par le marxisme, propose de considérer les arts comme «activité de connaissance». Elle s'appuie sur divers textes de Marx et d'Engels, du type de la célèbre lettre d'Engels à Miss Harkness (1888), disant qu'il a «plus appris, même en ce qui concerne les détails économiques (...)» chez Balzac «que dans tous les livres des historiens, économistes, statisticiens professionnels de l'époque pris ensemble» (Cf. *Briefwechsel*, Berlin, Dietz Verlag, 1953, p. 481).

Certes l'art peut être un moyen de connaissance mais faut-il pour autant faire entrer la pratique artistique réelle dans la définition, accommoder le mot «connaissance» à toutes les sauces? Une peinture de Kandinsky ne fait rien connaître d'autre qu'elle-même. Son intérêt est donc dans sa création, et non dans la prise de connaissance d'aspects déjà existants, mais non encore connus du monde. L'activité artistique n'est pas plus (ni moins) mode de connaissance que toute parole, tout écrit, toute fabrication. Et comme toute parole, tout écrit, toute Œuvre, elle peut jouer un rôle de désinformation, de méconnaissance. Lorsqu'en 1878, à Palo Alto (Californie), Muybridge obtint la première série d'instantanés d'un cheval de course, cela provoqua un grand émoi: ses résultats contredisaient Raphaël!

¹¹ On écarte habituellement avec trop de promptitude la notion de création *ex-nihilo*, à cause de la gangue théologique qui l'emprisonne et surtout par conformité aux acquis des sciences physiques. Pourtant, il n'est pas sûr que cette notion, certes irrecevable stricto-sensu, ait dit son dernier mot. Si créer ajoute à ce qui existe déjà en transformant par l'action humaine des *matériaux* en *matières*, il est en effet absurde de vouloir créer à partir de rien. Cependant il est certain que pour un esprit moderne, seul a vraiment d'importance, le supplément de singularité qui *paraîtra venir de rien* à travers le maquis des formes imitées. Aussi, défendre un *ex-nihilo méthodologique* n'est-ce pas défendre la création tout court?

¹² Cf. E. Morin et M. Piattelli, *L'unité de l'homme. Invariants biologiques et universaux culturels*, Paris, éd. du Seuil, 1974.

¹³ Cf. I. Prigogine et I. Stengers, *La Nouvelle Alliance*, Paris, Gallimard, 1980.

D'autre part, ne parle-t-on pas de «scénario» et de «simulation» concernant les représentations du futur en Prospective, domaine essentiellement réflexif et exploratoire? On sait que la Prospective se donne pour mission d'anticiper les développements scientifiques et technologiques futurs en posant des questions nouvelles pour la recherche. Dans toute simulation, dans toute anticipation, même la plus rigoureuse, entre une part d'intuition et de projection mentale qui interdisent de penser la recherche scientifique comme procédure purement déductive ou mécanique.

Toutefois, même si faire de la recherche au sens de recherche *scientifique*, comporte toujours en tant qu'acte, une part d'engagement du corps et de l'affect, un investissement psychologique, c'est-à-dire justement une part de *faire humain*, il n'empêche que c'est bien l'investigation et la vérification¹⁴ qui doivent l'emporter quant à la méthode requise. L'objectif global est bien d'établir des savoirs où la part d'un consensus de vérités doit augmenter. C'est dire que, certes, tous les rapprochements peuvent être poétiquement tentés entre recherche scientifique et création artistique, – cela est stimulant pour l'esprit et fécond pour la recherche – mais qu'en fin de compte, distinguer vaut mieux que confondre. Or, s'il peut y avoir par exemple, des points de convergence entre un biologiste du CNRS et un plasticien, si l'on peut considérer que tous deux, à leur manière «font des mondes»¹⁵, les buts réels, les moyens d'agir et les résultats obtenus ne peuvent s'identifier. Même si la recherche scientifique aime à se dire «créatrice», même si les artistes

¹⁴ Cependant, sur ce point aussi il y a débat. Par exemple, Karl Popper ne demande pas aux théories scientifiques d'être vérifiables, mais réfutables, falsifiables, testables. Voir: *La logique de la découverte scientifique*, (1933) trad. de l'angl., Paris, Payot, 1973.

¹⁵ Goodman va même plus loin et D. Chateau pose clairement la question: «Les goodmaniens développent ainsi le paradoxe que les mondes faits par l'art nous apprennent autant que les mondes faits par la science et cela dans la mesure où il n'y a pas de monde *ready-made*, mais diverses versions du monde créées par divers individus. L'idée est séduisante, mais correspond-elle à l'expérience que nous avons des choses et tout particulièrement, à l'expérience de l'artiste telle qu'elle se manifeste dans son activité et sa réflexion?» in *Arts plastiques, Recherches et Formation supérieure, Actes du colloque, op. cit.*, pp. 164-165.

Voir à ce propos l'article de Catherine Z. Elgin, «Comprendre: l'art et la science», in *Lire Goodman*, Combas, éd. de l'Eclat, 1992, pp. 49-67 qui écrit (p.50): «Toutefois, la science et la philosophie sont manifestement des entreprises cognitives. Une épistémologie incapable de les prendre en compte est trop anémique pour servir à quelque chose. Mais une épistémologie suffisamment vigoureuse pour expliquer leurs contributions cognitives ne peut, c'est ce que je suggère, éviter de prendre en compte les arts. Car pour l'essentiel, les arts font le même genre de contributions. Si j'ai raison, la question n'est pas de savoir si les arts fonctionnent cognitivement, mais comment ils le font.»

sont souvent fascinés par les démarches diversifiées des sciences¹⁶, leurs ressources inventives et leurs dérivés technologiques, indifférencier serait ouvrir la voie à un syncrétisme fumeux dont ces deux approches fondamentales de l'esprit humain que sont les sciences et les arts, auraient à pâtir.

Cependant, on découvre un virus, mais on crée un médicament car créer un médicament, tout en participant de la recherche scientifique, fait intervenir des mixtures comme la cuisine des recettes. La recherche d'un vaccin peut apparaître, par exemple, comme une création et il est indéniable que celui qui le découvre y met une puissance créatrice, faisant entrer en jeu une part d'intuition, d'«imagination scientifique»¹⁷, voire même quelquefois de hasard. Dans le cas d'un prototype d'automobile par exemple, il y a aussi étroite connivence de la création et de la recherche par les effets conjugués de la science des matériaux et d'une sorte de «*génésis non naturelle*» utilisant par exemple des souffleries pour créer les formes les mieux adaptées aux multiples contraintes auxquelles doit obéir le constructeur tout en singularisant le modèle¹⁸. Le prototype sera donc à la fois un

¹⁶ Il suffit de citer Klee: «En art aussi, on trouve un champ suffisant pour la recherche exacte, et les portes qui y donnent sont ouvertes depuis quelques temps. Ce qui était déjà accompli pour la musique avant la fin du XVIII^e siècle vient enfin de commencer dans le domaine plastique.» «Recherches exactes dans le domaine des arts», in *Théorie de l'art moderne, op. cit.*, p. 48. Mais Klee s'empresse de rétablir contre toute «loi nue», la «réalité vivante», «l'intuition» et «le génie»... Reste que la tentative de Klee est un exemple souvent cité dans l'enseignement universitaire en arts plastiques. On sait à quel point il existait un rêve de *Bauhaus* chez les «pères fondateurs» de l'UFR de Paris I. et la mention «sciences de l'art» le signale encore aujourd'hui discrètement. Voir aussi à propos de ce passage de Klee: Hubert Damisch, *Fenêtre jaune de cadmium*, Paris, Seuil, 1984, pp. 197-199.

¹⁷ En psychologie, le terme d'*imagination créatrice* s'oppose à celui d'*imagination reproductrice* et correspond à la faculté de produire de nouvelles images. Cette faculté créative désigne le processus qui permet à un sujet de dépasser le déjà-là dans n'importe quel domaine des activités humaines. Cf. aussi, Gérard Holton, *L'imagination scientifique*, trad. franc., Paris, Gallimard, 1982. A propos d'Einstein, il montre le rôle des «idées fixes» du savant (*themata*), dans ses découvertes.

¹⁸ «Entre la nature qui génère et l'homme qui 'instaure', il manque un chaînon pour rendre compte du mode de fabrication de ces objets dont le faire n'est plus décomposable en une succession de gestes humains et qui ne sont pas non plus le produit d'une croissance interne ou de la sécrétion d'un mollusque. Il s'agit du chaînon, disons mathématique: un module mathématique appliqué de façon sérielle. Entre endogénèse et *poiésis*, existe une *génésis non naturelle* qui se développe non seulement à l'aide de traceurs et de calculs mais aussi par des profilages de laboratoire. On pense aux souffleries dirigées sur des corps mous pour étudier l'aérodynamisme d'un prototype automobile par exemple. C'est justement la perte du fil mathématique, qui me semble, en revanche de l'ordre de la *poiésis*.»

R. Conte, «Art et téléphone», communication au séminaire *Le produit de la création*, 14-15 et 16 déc. 1990, Hammamet, Tunisie.

produit de la recherche technologique et une création qui, en tant que prototype sera unique, aura un statut de *pseudo-personne* dont la disparition par exemple accidentelle affligerait ses auteurs qu'elle compromet d'ailleurs en tant que collectif, tout comme le laboratoire est compromis en tant qu'auteur dans la création d'un vaccin.¹⁹

Notons qu'il y a une fâcheuse tendance à galvauder aussi bien le mot *création* que le mot *recherche* et cela ne peut être considéré comme une simple querelle de mots. Quand on parle de recherche, on devrait pouvoir sous-entendre «recherche scientifique» c'est-à-dire épistémologiquement la recherche d'un consensus sur des vérités alors que création se rapporte à la survenue d'une existence singulière, ce que faute de mieux, Souriau a appelé instauration.²⁰ L'idéal institutionnel des sciences, c'est qu'il y ait le

¹⁹ On reconnaît entre ces lignes les trois critères de la création exposés par R. Passeron. Cf. «Les critères de la création», in *Pour une philosophie de la création*, Paris, Klincksieck, 1989, pp. 154-163.

²⁰ Le terme d'instauration me paraît impropre, quelles que soient les raisons de Souriau, car à connotation pompeuse et officielle. Il n'appelle pas à considérer la fragilité poétique de l'Œuvre en cours, ses repentirs, ses destructions. Il sollicite la force et se réfère à la part edificatrice et édifiante de la création. Dire que le concept d'instauration est «le point de départ de la poétique» est très exagéré (*Vocabulaire d'esthétique*, *op. cit.*, art. «Instauration»). Pour la genèse de l'appropriation de ce concept par les recherches poétiques, voir René Passeron: «Le concept d'instauration et le développement de la poétique», (in *L'art instaurateur*, *Revue d'Esthétique*, 1980, n° 3-4, Paris, UGE, coll. 10/18.). Les mots certes nous manquent et s'appliquent à manquer leur cible en ce domaine. On sait le toilettage indispensable qu'il a fallu faire subir au mot «création» et combien de fois «poétique» a suscité (mais de moins en moins) l'étonnement, voire la perplexité. Peut-être faut-il recourir aux propositions des poètes. J'aime par exemple le mot-valise de Jean-Clarence Lambert: *laborinthe* pour dire à la fois le travail et le dédale de la conduite créatrice. Mais pourrait-on dire, sans ridicule, «laborinther» une Œuvre? Comment circonscrire par des mots justes, le mal de créer, en conservant la précision et la rigueur indispensables à l'analyse? Il n'y a pas de place pour le corps dans ce mot et ce concept philosophiques d'instauration, il n'a qu'une vigueur solennelle. Qu'on pense par exemple au mot «production» que proposait naguère Ricardou à la place de création! Et pourtant je me souviens combien ce terme paraissait scientifiquement supérieur à celui de création, englué dans sa gangue métaphysique et religieuse. *Créer* me semble donc bien meilleur que *produire* et *instaurer* car s'il véhicule un lourd passé théologique, il ouvre sur d'autres sources comme la racine *crecere* (de *creare*, croître) qu'indiquait notamment Yves Eyot («La fonction irremplaçable de la création artistique», *L'Humanité*, 9 Janvier 1976, p. 8. note 7.) et qui pousse *création* du côté de la genèse. Ce qui ne va pas non plus sans quelque inconvénient puisque, précisément il faut sauvegarder la précieuse distinction aristotélicienne entre *génésis* et *poiésis*. En se référant à *creare*, le danger est certes de confondre la *phusis* dont le principe de croissance se trouve à l'intérieur de la chose et le *poiëin* qui «importe» son principe

moins de création possible dans leurs produits mais il y en a toujours, au moins un peu. Réciproquement un processus créateur peut-il s'élaborer sans aucune accointance avec les recherches scientifiques de son temps? Y aurait-il un inconscient épistémologique de l'artiste-créateur, par exemple, qui le rendrait «absolument moderne», devançant même quelquefois par ses intuitions le système de certaines découvertes scientifiques?

Les arts plastiques et la notion de recherche

Le mot recherche doit donc être interrogé quant à sa validité dans le domaine des arts plastiques à l'université et être confronté à celui de création.²¹

Sans doute chercher n'est pas forcément *penser* et chez le «penseur» entre certainement une part importante de ce que nous entendons par création. L'Université française n'a pas pour vocation initiale, de former des écrivains ou des artistes et à ce titre, elle résiste à leur intrusion dès qu'il y a exhibition de subjectivité. Derrière les rapports entre *recherche* et *création*, sourd un problème beaucoup plus général, dont les arts plastiques ne sont que la partie flagrante, par le fait même d'une pratique agissant sur le visible. Mais en littérature, où écrit-on des poèmes? Où apprend-t-on à faire un roman? La tradition universitaire, sauf exceptions, (fruits de concessions historiques ou locales), tend à réduire au maximum non pas l'étude des œuvres, même en ce qu'elles ont de singulier, mais la création *matérielle* d'œuvres d'art en son sein. Il y a bien entendu une part indiscutable de «créativité» dans les travaux de beaucoup d'universitaires et de chercheurs, mais elle demeure *in fine* au service d'un mouvement général vers le vrai, et vise à la constitution de savoirs «ajoutés» qui modifieront le cas échéant les résultats de recherches antérieures du même champ.

humain dans l'Œuvre. Mais *create* a l'insigne avantage à mon sens de l'engendrement et de ce tamisage par le corps créateur, sans lequel la peinture et l'écriture, sans parler du théâtre ou de la danse, seraient de pauvres choses sophistiquées mais privées de leur moelle. Il faut donc travailler au corps les notions de création et d'Œuvre, quitte à les mettre en crise permanente, cela me semble plus fécond que de vouloir leur substituer des notions encore plus problématiques car, à mon avis, plus crispées et plus contestables, comme «production» et «instauration».

²¹ Sauf bien entendu à en faire un usage strictement métaphorique, d'ailleurs largement répandu, ou encore à l'employer de façon purement stratégique pour solliciter les bonnes grâces institutionnelles et administratives des autorités de tutelle. Mais ceci ne vaudrait pas que pour les arts plastiques...

L'idée d'une recherche *sur* les arts plastiques ne pose pas de problème particulier.²² En effet, les arts plastiques sont un objet d'étude, un champ d'investigation comme un autre. Cela va de soi. Il est autrement plus périlleux de parler de recherche en arts plastiques, c'est-à-dire dans le mouvement d'une pratique personnelle. S'agit-il d'une recherche sur soi-même? Auquel cas il faudrait parler de psychologie de la création. S'agit-il d'une recherche sur la signification de nos propres œuvres? Sommes-nous les mieux placés pour en analyser les ressorts?

Réciproquement, tout artiste-créditeur est habité par un esprit de recherche et travaille de façon concomitante et indissociable dans le sensible et le cognitif. Peut-être la nuance se situe-t-elle au niveau du chercheur-plasticien-universitaire qui problématise, c'est-à-dire questionne la dissociation du faire et de l'analyse du faire à des fins extérieures à son œuvre propre, à des fins de généralisation scientifique cumulative. A ce point, nous entrons dans le problème des conditions de possibilité d'une auto-poïétique des arts plastiques, qui me semble la position de principe la plus cohérente et que j'ai faite mienne.

En tant que peintre, c'est d'abord en moi-même que je dois aller puiser les ressources de mon «corpus», plus que dans les livres ou dans les archives et en ce sens, je ne suis pas à proprement parler un «chercheur».

Ainsi la part de moi-même la moins maîtrisable serait l'un des matériaux de ma recherche. Le peintre-chercheur exercerait sa curiosité cognitive à l'égard de lui-même ou de cet inqualifiable de lui-même. Pourtant, ce qui se manifeste de ce *moi-même*, se heurte aux résistances du faire, aux aléas et aux aspérités du médium, de sorte que je ne sais pas à l'avance, comment l'œuvre s'informera. Loin d'être une idée qui s'incarne, elle est souvent au contraire l'échec d'une intention, l'objet d'une volonté contrariée, en proie à une *rectification*²³ permanente de son approche par des actes empiriquement contrôlés.

²² Sans oublier, essentiellement en dehors de l'université, la recherche pour les arts plastiques, par exemple celle en vue de la restauration des Œuvres anciennes et contemporaines. Voir par exemple le livre de Ségolène Bergeon, *Science et patience ou la restauration des peintures*, Paris, RMN, 1990.

²³ «Alors que le détournement diverge, la rectification, en tant que détournement détourné, ramène dans le droit chemin d'un projet créateur, même flou, une conduite qui ne veut pas s'égarer. On peut certes rectifier une opération pour en améliorer la capacité détournante, quand l'intention de détourner est l'axe d'un ferme projet. La rectification semble néanmoins, à l'opposé du détournement, une conduite normative de recentrage, de réorientation et de rigueur. Or, la conduite créatrice, pleine de ratures, de repentirs, de «remords» et de reprises, est souvent rectificative. Le concept de rectification me semble même devoir prendre une position éminente dans l'étude des rapports poétiques entre l'étant et le devant-être.»

Peindre serait la dépossession d'un moi pensant par un moi en acte dans un présent opérationnel dont il faut coûte que coûte accommoder la contrainte pour sauver la peau du tableau.

Il ne s'agit pas d'une recherche d'ordre psychologique, d'un «travail» sur soi-même, mais de la confrontation d'un état de mon esprit avec un état de mon pouvoir sur le monde à travers le médium pictural. Seul compte mon pouvoir d'accomplissement dans lequel l'idée germinale se perd et mue à l'aune du matériau. Faire de la recherche en peinture, c'est paradoxalement ne jamais lâcher prise, avoir toujours une main «trempée» dans la matière²⁴. Il serait commode de parler ici de tâtonnement mais je préfère penser ceci en termes d'approche et d'approximation, car peindre c'est souvent ajuster. Mais d'où me vient ce souci d'ajustage, de quelles règles procède-t-il? Si règle il y a.

C'est à ce point que le savoir sur l'art fait obstacle à la création et en même temps lui sert de repoussoir, voire de ferment.²⁵ Ce qui me paraît

René Passeron, *La naissance d'Icare*, Paris, AE2CG éd., 1996.

L'auteur y fait bien entendu directement référence au Bachelard de *La formation de l'esprit scientifique*, Paris, Vrin, 1938, p. 10.

²⁴ Comme l'écrit Philippe Junod à propos de Léonard, dans un chapitre d'ailleurs très éclairant pour les recherches poétiques et intitulé, «L'aventure créatrice»: «Fasciné par le prestige de la poésie et de la science, il [Léonard] cherche à démontrer que la peinture leur est à la fois comparable et supérieure. – Vous aussi, vous avez recours à l'exécution manuelle et matérielle, dit-il aux poètes. Et aux savants: votre pensée reste inférieure en ce qu'elle ne comporte pas cette 'operazione' matérielle qui fait tout le prix de l'expérience picturale.» *Transparence et opacité*, op. cit. p. 223.

²⁵ J'écrivais le 3 décembre 90 dans *En attendant que ça sèche*, éd. P. Weider & Musée de Bourges, Paris, 1993: «L'histoire de l'art est-elle un danger pour le peintre? Je me plais à répéter qu'aujourd'hui, l'artiste a la chance de disposer d'une vision historique et planétaire des Œuvres créées. Mais n'est-ce pas aussi dans le même temps un terrible obstacle? L'approfondissement des connaissances historiques multiplie les plaisirs du savoir et alimente la réflexion mais en même temps nous obnubile sur plusieurs plans. (...) Mais il y a plus: les événements de la vie des autres peintres peuvent servir d'alibi à nos propres faiblesses; à trop parcourir les biographies, à trop rêver aux fictions des historiens, on ne vit plus la 'vraie vie'. (...)»

Il ne s'agit pas seulement de l'histoire biographique; qu'elle soit iconologique, formaliste, sémiologique, psychanalytique, etc., l'histoire de l'art me met à l'écart, à distance de mon Œuvre propre, comme si j'y appliquais fantasmatiquement les analyses en question! Je passe donc mon propre travail au crible des valeurs véhiculées par telle construction historique. Est-ce une attitude qui me serait particulière, comme refuge honteux? Ou bien y a-t-il là une composante non négligeable de ce qui, par exemple, attire tant de gens vers les études d'histoire de l'art?»

A ce propos, cf. *Recherches Poétiques* n°1, sem., aut./hiv. 94. qui contient le dossier que j'ai préparé, intitulé «L'histoire de l'art, ferment ou obstacle pour la création?», avec notamment les communications du Colloque du 26 mai 94 (Université de Valenciennes).

«juste» ne l'est point en fonction d'une règle, fût-elle d'or, mais plutôt en fonction d'une continuelle accommodation (et acculturation²⁶) de mon regard, c'est-à-dire de ma connaissance sensible de la peinture. Il y a bien sûr des facteurs externes, les visites d'ateliers et d'expositions, les catalogues, les débats, les travaux des jeunes étudiants et toutes sortes d'autres éléments qui viennent finalement s'écouler d'un seul jet ou jus, par le goulot d'étranglement du regard générateur.

Mais le plus étonnant, c'est que mes propres œuvres sont probablement les plus normatives de ma pratique de la peinture et tendent à colporter leurs coordonnées sensibles de tableau en tableau, en sorte que le principal obstacle à ma recherche en peinture serait d'abord ma propre peinture. Ce déjà-là, usant de son droit d'ainesse pour certifier conforme les tableaux suivants.

Il se produit ainsi une véritable politique de l'écart par rapport à une norme que j'ai moi-même instaurée.

Voici donc une recherche où il n'y a rien à trouver.²⁷ Et jamais je n'en finirai de chercher car il n'y a rien à trouver que précisément la recherche même. A peine faite, l'œuvre est abandonnée et la bête s'en va en quête d'autres habitacles pour abriter momentanément son être nomade. Je peux accumuler les toiles, je peux les montrer, mais elles ne m'apprendront rien. Peut-on encore appeler *recherche* ce qui de fait, procède plutôt de la création?

En fait, ce ne sont pas les œuvres qui constituent la recherche, au sens que je m'efforce de rendre à cette notion, mais la conscience des rapports qui s'accomplissent en elles, quand j'en éprouve l'existence. En témoignant de ces rapports, en étudiant la dynamique ou l'inertie de leurs effets, en laissant la création produire un savoir en dehors de l'œuvre, il est possible de rassembler sur la relation au pictural, par exemple, un certain nombre

²⁶ J'emploie ce terme de façon un peu métaphorique; pourtant, si l'*acculturation* se définit comme l'adaptation d'un individu à une culture étrangère avec laquelle il entre en contact, c'est bien l'intrusion exotique de ce que je crée qu'il me faut admettre, y compris contre mes «convictions» de la veille.

²⁷ «Le peintre-chercheur lutte contre son passé, tout en y trouvant mille nourritures. Le plus important pour lui, n'est donc pas de savoir (de rêver) où il va, mais de ne pas rester trop longtemps où il est. S'il a parfois, dans ses expériences, l'impression de piétiner, son impatience est compensée par le sentiment qu'il n'y a pas de temps perdu pour qui sait tirer la leçon, même de ses pires échecs. En ceci, chercher c'est toujours trouver suffisamment pour ne pas perdre pied. Mais, par ce qu'elle trouve, l'œuvre est alors surprenante.» R. Passeron, *L'œuvre picturale et les fonctions de l'apparence*, *op. cit.*, p. 325.

«Chercher, c'est aller au réel à travers le labyrinthe qui nous le cache. Et quand on arrive au bout, on trouve le vide.» René Passeron, «Recherche et création», in *Arts plastiques, recherches, & Formations supérieures*, *op. cit.* p. 129.

de connaissances dont on peut au moins constater l'occurrence statistique. Il ne s'agit pas de règles techniques ou formelles mais de la connaissance anthropologique d'un enchaînement d'actes dans ses rapports avec la «cause matérielle» et la «cause formelle». Qu'y a-t-il de généralisable dans l'opération matérielle et symbolique du faire plastique? En même temps, qu'y a-t-il de spécifique? Ma recherche poïétique se trouve aux pieds de ces questions.

Rachida Triki
Esthétique et philosophie des limites
La scène du nommable

J'ai choisi d'intervenir dans le cadre de cette rencontre dans l'axe du rapport esthétique et philosophie (du corps et des sens). Pour cela, je prendrai comme problématique la philosophie comme pensée des limites et comme critique radicale de ce que j'appelle la scène du nommable. Cette critique passe par la prise en considération de la dimension esthétique et poétique du rapport du corps au monde. Je réfléchirai donc à partir de la mise en place de la scène originaire où se donnent à la co-naissance et les formes objets et leur désignation, en d'autres termes à partir de cette délimitation essentielle d'un fond d'où émerge le visible, séparé, distinct, discernable et nommable. Je poserai le problème à un niveau à la fois ontologique et esthétique m'interrogeant sur le comment et sur les conséquences de cette mise en place.

Voici tout d'abord deux très courts extraits : L'un par lequel débute la Genèse, l'autre d'un poème de Jean Laude «Comme à l'aube la mer».¹

Genèse : «Et la terre était sans forme et vide, et des ténèbres étaient sur la face de l'abîme, et l'esprit de Dieu se mouvait sur le dessus des eaux.

Et Dieu nomma la lumière jour... ce fut le premier jour

Et Dieu nomma l'étendue cieux... ce fut le second jour

Et Dieu nomma le sec la terre ; et il nomma l'amas des eaux mers.»

Jean Laude : «L'aube tranquille pèse à peine

Et la ligne de crête / s'éclaircit

Une colline à l'autre s'épaulant

Epousa l'espace / un langage commun

(comme à l'aube la mer)»

Voici la scène (disons ses prémisses) sous ses formes mythique et esthétique. Et ces deux formes sont déjà grosses du lien ontologique entre lieu, mots et choses dont l'avènement est un partage qui rend l'espace habitable et distinct parce qu'éclairci.

Il porte en germe l'organisation du temps dans la succession des possibles et les délimitations de l'espace dans la coexistence des choses. Cependant, ce lieu ne serait encore rien s'il n'y avait cette séparation première qui

¹ Comme à l'aube la mer – J. Laude, *Revue Le point d'être* n°1, printemps 1970.

pose Dieu ou le poète dans l'écart nécessaire de leur autonomie créatrice : écart qui permet l'expression dans le verbe ou le déchiffrement dans l'écriture poétique.

Mais jusque là, la séparation n'est pas si radicale. Pour la poète, elle pourrait se comprendre sur le mode de l'accueillir ou du recueillir (« le langage commun ») délivrés dans une parole ; pour Dieu, sous la forme de l'émanation ou de l'immanence. Et la scène ne serait pas tout à fait scène, englobant tout à la fois acteurs et spectateurs. Le fond où se délivre la parole et ce qui est parlé est le même, fait de sympathies et, de correspondances, ouvrant seulement dans la séparation de l'avènement du monde à l'interprétation des signes comme à une exegèse infinie.² C'est ainsi que pour le Moyen âge, exister ou pour reprendre un concept Heideggerien, être un étant, signifiait « appartenir à un degré déterminé de l'ordre du créé et correspondre à la cause créatrice (analogie entis) » c-à-d que dans les limites du monde s'offrait par analogies et correspondances des niveaux d'adéquation du spirituel au matériel, de l'intellection à la chose, du nommable au nommé ; l'animation de tous les étants relevant d'un seul et même éclairage.

Quand donc le créateur que j'évoquai plus haut devient-il réellement metteur en scène ? Où se situe la frontière qui pose dans leur autonomie et le lieu des objets séparés et ce, à partir de quoi les objets sont distingués, nommés, manipulés ? c-à-d ce double partage à partir duquel se fait la mise en scène de la connaissance vraie et des techniques, celui par lequel nous continuons naïvement à maîtriser le monde en l'énumérant et qui fait dire à Ernest Cassirer³ « En apprenant à nommer les choses, l'enfant n'ajoute pas simplement une liste de signes artificiels à sa connaissance antérieure d'objets empiriques tout faits. Il apprend plutôt à former les concepts de ces objets, à s'accommoder du monde objectif (...) Les premiers mots dont l'enfant fait un usage conscient peuvent être comparés au bâton à l'aide duquel l'aveugle se dirige à tâtons. » Nommer, voir et concevoir les objets, c'est quitter l'empiricité pour le monde objectif, c'est tracer la ligne de démarcation qui installera un écart essentiel pour que se donne la représentation dans un rapport frontal entre celui qui conçoit et le conçu. Cet écart, c'est celui que concrétise le bâton de l'aveugle équivalent du rayon visuel tout court, autrefois œil de l'âme ou encore vue de l'esprit puis pensée claire et distincte.

² M. Foucault, *les mots et les choses* Chap II *La prose du monde* p 32 « Le monde s'enroulait sur lui-même : la terre répétant le ciel, les visages se mirant dans les étoiles, et l'herbe enveloppant dans ses tiges les secrets qui servaient à l'homme ».

³ *Au Essay of Man*. Yale University Press 1944 p132.

La scène se découpe alors dans l'opération d'une vision objective du monde qui fait passer de la présence à la représentation distribuant les sites, pour faire de l'objet «obstant» un objet frontal, du monde une «image conçue»⁴. Cette séparation fondatrice marque l'émancipation du sujet connaissant, «ego cogito sum «qui prendra tous les aspects du» video sum «dans sa position panoptique et instituante. Sans doute est-ce là l'œuvre de la philosophie moderne lorsque le sujet» sub-jectum «devient le fondement dernier qui interprète tout étant sur le mode de l'objectivité mais déjà, à l'aube de la métaphysique Platon» posait l'être comme idea et faisait de l'eidos l'évidence «c-à-d la chose offerte à la vue en tant qu'elle se tient devant nous» (condition lointaine, historique, pensera Heidegger).

Le dispositif donc qui met de part et d'autre, en vis à vis, le sujet et l'objet substitue au lien (legein) vertical de l'appartenance au monde et du recueillement du sens, le logos sous sa forme moderne de discours énonciatif, cet instrument par lequel se concrétise l'écart entre l'image mentale et la délimitation de la chose.

Ce champ séculaire de l'objectivation a été à travers ses découpes idéaliste, rationaliste et même empiriste le lieu décisif d'enfermement dont le sens relève des niveaux de représentation. Tout le livre III de *l'Essai philosophique sur l'entendement humain* de J. Locke ne traite, en fait, que de cette mise en scène qui permet de placer convenablement les niveaux de représentation dans un rapport défini des sons comme signes intérieurs aux idées, elles mêmes, images mentales mais invisibles des signes extérieurs que sont les choses du monde. Nous voyons que même dans une conception purement sensualiste, entre les idées comme modes de la conscience et ces mêmes idées comme représentations d'objets, ce sont les mots qui dessinent à la fois, la séparation et le lien fondamental, entre l'identité du monde du dedans et l'existence d'un monde du dehors, source première d'informations.

C'est l'esprit qui fixe le sens des termes, dans la pleine et évidente perception de la chose c-à-d dans la permanence de son identité et sa différence⁵, de sorte que n'importe quel objet, même la chose la plus informe

⁴ M. Heidegger, *Époque des conceptions du monde* p 119 : Re-présenter signifie ici : faire venir devant soi, en tant qu'obstant ce qui est là devant, le rapporter à soi, qui le représente et le réfléchit dans ce rapport à soi en tant que région d'où échoit toute mesure.

⁵ J. Locke, *Essai philosophique concernant l'entendement humain* L II Chap Xi p 117 trad. Coste, Locke compare l'esprit à une chambre noire «à mon avis, l'entendement ne ressemble pas mal à un cabinet entièrement obscur, qui n'aurait que quelques petites ouvertures pour laisser entrer par dehors les images extérieures et visibles, ou pour ainsi dire, les idées des choses : de sorte que si ces images venant à se peindre dans ce cabinet obscur pouvaient y rester et y être placées en ordre en sorte qu'on peut les trouver en l'occasion, il y aurait une grande ressemblance entre ce cabinet et l'entendement humain».

et la plus singulière, dès l'instant où elle est susceptible d'être distinguée des autres, peut recevoir un nom qui recouvre uniquement son image mentale. Le rapport frontal de l'entendement humain et du monde serait en sorte analogiquement celui «d'un cabinet obscur» (l'image est de Locke) qui recevrait les images extérieures du visible comme des empreintes et ce à partir de petites ouvertures (pour canaliser l'anarchie du visible), images que, par sa vertu ordonnatrice, il restituerait correctement, pareillement au discours intelligible. Comme on le voit, la représentation du monde s'organise toute entière du côté de la pensée constituante qui travaille sur le mode de la vision, celle qui restituerait une sorte de tableau pleine Renaissance, fenêtre ou miroir correcteur où viendraient s'ordonner le chaos apparent des figures anamorphiques du monde. Mais cette mise en scène qui joue la ressemblance de la chose à son image spéculaire ne relève donc que de la dénomination extérieure c-à-d celle qui n'appartient qu'à la pensée.

Nous constatons donc que la possibilité du nommable comme pensable, dans l'exigence de la connaissance vraie, pose comme préalable nécessaire la frontière fondatrice entre voyant et visible qui délimite la scène des représentations et fixe la place du spectateur, metteur en scène.

A ce niveau de la réflexion, je voudrais bien sûr évoquer (brièvement ici) l'immense travail de M. Merleau Ponty qui n'a cessé dans toute son œuvre de combattre l'illusion du rapport frontal de l'homme au monde, à partir d'une longue méditation sur l'énigme du visible et la transcendance de la parole. Contre l'illusion de la transparence de la pensée qui ne pense quoique ce soit qu'en l'assimilant, en le constituant, en le transformant en pensée, Merleau Ponty convoque le corps. «L'intuitus mentis» ne peut pas s'opérer sous la forme de la vision optique parce que la vision est essentiellement mouvement et qu'elle exige un corps. Elle est dans l'entrelacs «de nos projets sensorimoteurs». Elle n'a donc rien à voir avec le bout du bâton de l'aveugle parce qu'elle se précède toujours ailleurs dans la constellation d'un monde qui n'est pas devant elle comme un plan à déchiffrer. Bien au contraire, elle éclôt au milieu des choses comme une déflagration de l'être effaçant la frontière toute théorique du voyant/visible, du sentant/senti ; frontière qui a réduit la complexité du monde à la transparence d'une pensée d'où s'énoncerait convenablement l'ordre des choses. Toute délimitation ne peut être que réductrice et le sujet fondateur et opérant qui s'est institué n'est jamais qu'un sujet atrophié, fantomatique, alors que «le soi est un soi par confusion, narcissisme, inhérence de celui qui voit à ce qu'il voit, de celui qui touche à ce qu'il touche, du sentant au sentir. Un soi donc qui est pris entre des choses, qui a une face et un dos, un passé et un avenir...» (OE p19). Merleau Ponty a été l'un des premiers à poser le rapport du su-

jet au monde comme un rapport de «situation de fait au monde vécu» ; un monde qui ne se réduit pas seulement à un vis à vis, objet de connaissance et d'action mais qui «entoure, comprend, traverse un sujet en situation», sujet-corps dont les pouvoirs ne sont pas épuisables dans un inventaire.

L'énigme du visible donc est celle du corps même qui par sa nature de vivant perceptif déborde nécessairement les frontières de la scène projective, celle qui constitue les choses visibles en voyantes et vues alors que le voyant est visible et le visible voyant. Cette réversibilité est justement le fait du corps. «Un corps humain, écrit-il (L'œil et l'esprit, p 21) est là quand, entre voyant et visible, entre touchant et touché, entre un œil et l'autre, entre la main et la main, se fait une sorte de recroisement, quand s'allume l'étincelle du sentant-sensible, quand prend ce feu qui ne cessera pas de brûler jusqu'à ce que tel accident du corps défasse ce que nul accident n'aurait suffi à faire ...»

L'exemplarité de la peinture est là pour en témoigner pareille à une philosophie figurée de la vision qui montre choses et corps faits de la même étoffe. Comme cette Montagne Sainte Victoire, plusieurs fois peinte par Cezanne parce que «la nature est à l'intérieur du peintre» (non pas comme dans le cabinet obscur de Locke) mais comme la formule charnelle du monde que restitue le tracé de la peinture. La leçon de la peinture et notamment depuis Rembrandt, c'est que les choses éclatent hors de l'adhérence de leur enveloppe, débordent leurs formes intelligibles, montre que leur spatialité n'est pas celle de la res extensa. Dedans du dehors et dehors du dedans, voilà donnée toute la duplicité du sentir «hors frontière». Elle vient de ce qu nous habitons et sommes habités par le sensible et le visible de part en part. Ce qui fait dire à Merleau-Ponty dans *Visible et invisible* (p 164) que «du percevoir au perçu, il n'a pas d'antériorité, il y a une simultanéité ou même retard».

Comment alors concevoir et désigner ce qui nous traverse sans l'objectivation essentielle des choses, sans cet écart fondateur de la représentation classique ? Quel sens auront les mots dans une pensée qui ne se possède pas elle même en toute clarté ?

Doit-on s'arrêter à cette phrase (*Visible et invisible*, p 168) qui semble sortie tout droit de l'Innommable de Beckett lorsque M. Ponty écrit : «Le philosophe parle mais c'est une faiblesse en lui, et une faiblesse inexplicable ; il devrait se taire, coïncider en silence et rejoindre dans l'Être une philosophie qui est déjà faite».

Suffirait-il donc d'habiter la chair du monde pour en recueillir secrètement les sens ? En fait, cette sensation du silence, c'est celle qui met le philosophe en état de surprendre le fait brut de penser. Dans le retrait

qu'elle opère, elle est déjà pensée à l'œuvre dans une quasi corporeité, pensée où germent non des idées, mais des matrices d'idées. Penser autrement et c'est ainsi qu'on comprend les substitutions aux notions de concept, idée, esprit, représentation, des notions comme articulations niveaux, charnières, pivots, configurations (Visible et invisible, p 277) qui frayent les passages, conservent la complexité et l'épaisseur du monde ; la tentation du silence c'est celle qui veut faire taire le discours pour une autre parole, parole parlante. C'est paradoxalement là qu'il échoie au philosophe de parler, de céder à cette faiblesse qu'il partage avec le poète et l'écrivain. Et c'est pourquoi, il ne faut pas voir dans l'incitation à la parole une contradiction lorsque M. Ponty écrit (dans Signes, p 104) : «Le fond des choses est – qu'en effet, le sensible n'offre rien qu'on puisse dire si l'on n'est pas philosophe ou écrivain, mais que cela ne tient pas à ce qu'il serait un en soi ineffable, mais à ce qu'on ne sait pas dire».

Que peuvent donc dire philosophes et écrivains, eux qui seuls savent dire ?

La tâche de la philosophie est un travail en profondeur, à l'intérieur de l'Être. Elle devient par la considération de la dimension poïétique et esthétique du langage et des choses, une confrontation aux limites. Elle se doit à un moment de son développement abandonner l'exercice frontal qui l'a constituée dans ses concepts pour semer discrètement, patiemment une sorte d'ontologie indirecte qui préserverait la dimension inchoative du langage. Proche du geste mais en même temps capable de s'affranchir de l'immédiateté, la parole comme le tracé pictural se tient entre immanence et transcendance. Le philosophe comme le créateur se tient dedans et dehors, dans un rapport «oblique et clandestin». Traversant les frontières et leurs discours, se mettant au secret de leurs fondements, décelant leurs stratégies et leurs illusions. Le philosophe s'illimite en deçà de la scène qui faisait le partage entre pensée et nommable et contre les écrans discursifs, les amas de mots déjà dit, il continue à parler une parole d'ouverture, d'écoute qui puisse le rapprocher de l'originaire. Ses paroles assument les mêmes ambiguïtés que celles de l'écrivain car ce dernier utilise aussi la langue mais en un usage singulier, pour lui faire dire ce qu'elle n'a jamais dit, des expressions inédites qui puissent faire passer la déhiscence du sensible (Proust a su décrire la doublure et la profondeur du sensible).

Il est vrai que cette traversée en oblique peut être extrême ; une folle entreprise que de parler contre le langage jusqu'à jeter le paradoxe au cœur de toutes les certitudes hors des formes pronominales, des rôles assignés, des limites du corps et de la pensée comme ce non-personnage de *l'Innommable* de Beckett qui persiste comme un murmure sourd, hors frontières du

silence ; mais toutes les traversées n'ont pas cette forme tragique et épuiser les frontières de la langue et des signes jusqu'aux limites, peut se faire aussi par détour et allégement – comme ces peintures modernes où les tracés semblent surgir du fond de la toile grattée et allégée de toute l'histoire de la peinture qui les définit comme telles – ou encore comme dit le poète (Jean Laude – *Diana Trivia* p 36) en rendant la ligne poreuse «non pas la retracer d'un trait plus soutenu, mais la rendre poreuse, peut-être l'éclaircir».

Presque invisible, une écriture tremble/

Comme, tracé sur une vitre, un signe

Suit les contours du vide

Et le vide scintille

Et le silence est blanc

Comme à l'aube la mer. Jean Laude.

Dalibor Davidović
Zum Begriff System in der Musikwissenschaft
Beobachtungen einiger pragmatisch ausgerichteten Entwürfe

In einem seiner 1982 veröffentlichten Texte beklagte Carl Dahlhaus beim Abhandeln der Begriffe *System* und *Systematik* im Kontext der Musikwissenschaft den Mangel an Reflexion in ihrem gegenseitigen Bezugsverhältnis. Von der Voraussetzung ausgehend, man sollte dieses Verhältnis als eine eigenartige Abstufung auffassen, versuchte er eine der möglichen Lösungen anzudeuten, fügte aber nebenbei hinzu, auf die seitens der allgemeinen *Systemtheorie* begründeten Lösungen werde er nicht eingehen, da die Musikwissenschaftler diese Lösungen als die Ausgangspunkte für ihre eigenen Entwürfe bis dahin nicht berücksichtigt hätten (Dahlhaus 1982: 34). Kurz nach der Veröffentlichung des soeben erwähnten Textes von Dahlhaus erschienen – wenngleich nicht unter seinem Einfluß – einige Arbeiten, in denen der Versuch unternommen wurde, die vom Begriff *System* ausgehenden, unter anderen disziplinbezogenen Umständen entstehenden, sich von der Musikwissenschaft unterscheidenden Theorien auch in ihrem eigenen Rahmen verwendbar zu machen. Und gerade über solche Theorien wird hier die Rede sein. Dabei sollte man vielleicht gleich hervorheben, daß sich meine Beobachtung dieser Arbeiten hier von zwei Fragen wird leiten lassen. Die erste wurde vom Soziologen Niklas Luhmann gestellt, als er über das Problem der Anknüpfung an die terminologische Tradition der jeweiligen wissenschaftlichen Disziplin schrieb. Laut Luhmann sind in einem solchen Fall zwei Optionen möglich: »Terminologien zu kontinuieren, obwohl ihre Bedeutung sich ändert, oder sie aufzugeben, und damit auf Identifikationslinien zur Tradition hin zu verzichten.« (Luhmann 1981: 173) Falls diese zweite Operation jedoch das Greifen nach einer im Rahmen einer anderen Disziplin geschaffenen Terminologie darstellt, entsteht nach Luhmann einerseits auch das Problem der Kontrolle, die eine Disziplin dadurch bezüglich einer anderen übernimmt, während andererseits das Problem einer gewissen *Inflationierung* des theoretischen Jargons der Disziplin erscheint, aus der der Wortschatz entliehen wurde (Luhmann 1981: 175). Die zweite Frage von der weiterhin die Rede sein wird ist die der Problemrelevanz, die mit dem Thema dieser Konferenz einigermaßen zusammenhängt.

Bevor ich auf diese Fragen eingehe, möchte ich die Kronologie des Erscheinens von hier berücksichtigten musikwissenschaftlichen Arbeiten

kurz skizzieren, wobei ich auch die ihnen zugrundeliegenden theoretischen Traditionen angebe. Die früheste Arbeit, die hier berücksichtigt wird, ist das Buch des Soziologen Frank Rotter über Musik als Kommunikationsmedium (Rotter 1985). Darin wird die Terminologie zweier soziologischer Systemtheorien gebraucht: diejenigen von Talcott Parsons und von Niklas Luhmann. Es wurden 1991 zwei umfangreiche Arbeiten publiziert: eine Dissertation des Musikwissenschaftlers Rolf Großmann über Musik als Kommunikation, die von der Terminologie der *Empirischen Literaturwissenschaft* (ELW) Siegfried J. Schmidts ausgeht (Großmann 1991), wie auch die thematisch verwandte Dissertation Torsten Casimirs (Casimir 1991). Deren Ausgangspunkt stellte jedoch die Luhmannsche Theorie dar. Auf diese Theorie beruft sich auch der im selben Jahr veröffentlichte Bericht des Musikwissenschaftlers Clytus Gottwald, der als öffentlicher Vortrag zustande kam (Gottwald 1991). Im Jahr 1993 wurde ein kurzer systemtheoretisch ausgerichteter Text des Musikwissenschaftlers Ulrich Mosch publiziert (Mosch 1993). Das immer noch nicht veröffentlichte Referat des Musikwissenschaftlers Daniel Müllensiefen aus dem Jahr 1994 spricht über die unter dem Sammelbegriff des *Radikalen Konstruktivismus* zusammengefaßten theoretischen Ausrichtungen in deren Rahmen, unter anderen, auch die Theorien Luhmanns und Schmidts ihren Stellenwert bekommen sollen (Müllensiefen 1994). Ähnlich ist auch ein Referat von Großmann aus dem Jahr 1997 ausgerichtet; darin wird zwar innerhalb des *konstruktivistischen Paradigmas* als Stützpunkt die Theorie Schmidts gewählt (Großmann 1997). Im selben Jahr wurde auch der letzte Text veröffentlicht, von dem hier die Rede sein wird, der Beitrag des Musikwissenschaftlers Ulrich Tadday unter dem Titel *Systemtheorie und Musik* (Tadday 1997).

Die gegenseitigen Bezugsverhältnisse der hier angegebenen Entwürfe werde ich hier kurz darstellen, von der Vorgehensweise ausgehend, die vom Soziologen Armin Nassehi vorgeschlagen wurde, als er über den Begriff der *Differenz* in drei unterschiedlichen Theorien schrieb. In der Absicht, einer Deutung auszuweichen, die behaupten würde, was die jeweiligen Theorien *sind*, inszenierte er deren gegenseitige Beobachtungen (Nassehi 1995: 54), wobei er vom Begriff *Beobachtung* ausging, mit welchem innerhalb der Systemtheorie »jedes Operieren mit einer Unterscheidung« (Luhmann 1984: 110) bezeichnet wird. Beobachtet man jetzt die Art, auf die die erwähnten musikwissenschaftlichen Arbeiten einander gegenseitig beobachteten, ist es möglich, die Differenz zwischen den ihnen zugrundeliegenden Theorien einzuführen und sie aufgrund dessen in fünf Gruppen einzuteilen. In der ersten Gruppe würden sich solche Arbeiten befinden, die von der ELW ausgingen und sich mit Arbeiten beschäftigten, die sich auf die Systemtheorie

berufen (Rotter/Großmann 1991, Casimir/Großmann 1997); wären in der zweiten jene Arbeiten zu finden, die von der ELW ausgingen und sich mit gleichartigen Arbeiten befassten (Großmann 1991/Großmann 1997), während in der dritten Gruppe die Arbeiten vorkommen, die sich auf die Systemtheorie stützten und ebenso die Arbeiten beobachteten, deren Ausgangspunkt gerade diese Theorie war (Rotter/Casimir, Rotter/Tadday, Gottwald/Mosch). Die vierte und fünfte Gruppe wird die Arbeiten umfassen, die explizite vom Radikalen Konstruktivismus ausgingen, obwohl der Stellenwert dieser theoretischen Ausrichtung – wenigstens nach der Beurteilungen in der Diskussion außerhalb der Musikwissenschaft – in Bezug auf die zwei vorhergehenden Ausrichtungen einigermaßen ambivalent ist.¹ In der vierten Gruppe werden aus der angegebenen Perspektive die Arbeiten beobachtet, die sich auf die ELW stützen (Großmann 1991/Müllensiefen), während in der fünften Gruppe die Arbeiten berücksichtigt werden, die vom systemtheoretischen Wortschatz ausgehen (Casimir/Müllensiefen).

Wenn jetzt andere Differenzen, wie jene zwischen den in einzelnen Entwürfen theoretisch zu umfassenden *Ebenen* außer acht gelassen werden,²

¹ Obwohl man mit dem Begriff *Radikaler Konstruktivismus* (oder nur *Konstruktivismus*) manchmal die Erkenntnistheorie bezeichnet, auf die sowohl die ELW, als auch die Systemtheorie Luhmanns sich stützen, wird er öfter als eine Etikette für ein besonderes Disziplingefüge gebraucht, das einige kybernetisch oder neurobiologisch ausgerichteten Arbeiten (wie z.B. Roth 1997) umfaßt. Wenn man aber die Arbeiten wie beispielsweise Nassehi 1992 und Schmidt 1995 beobachtet, ist es möglich zu schließen, daß die Differenz, die von ihnen installiert wurde, ausdrücklicher die Systemtheorie von der ELW und dem Radikalen Konstruktivismus abtrennt; es scheint, daß in diesen Arbeiten die Unterschiede zwischen der ELW und dem Radikalen Konstruktivismus fast verschwunden sind. Nassehi fügt allerdings hinzu, daß auch »Luhmann selbst wohl an konstruktivistische Erkenntnistheorien anschließt, er aber zu anderen Ergebnissen kommt als seine Kritiker« (Nassehi 1992: 43).

² Zieht man in Betracht beispielsweise die Klassifikation in Großmann 1991, wo man die Theorien – von der semiotischen Triade Charles Morris' ausgehend – nach jenen verteilen, die auf der *syntaktischen*, *semantischen* oder *pragmatischen* Ebene operieren, ist es wohl möglich, einige der hier erwähnten musikwissenschaftlichen Entwürfen für *unpragmatisch* und deswegen im Kontext dieser Beobachtung für unangemessen zu halten. Die erwähnten Arbeiten wurden jedoch in diese Beobachtung eingeordnet, weil jede von ihnen wenigstens die Möglichkeit anführt, daß die Theorie auch auf der *pragmatischen* Ebene operierbar sei (vgl. Gottwald 1991: 36, Mosch 1993: 1). Die anderen Differenzen, die hier nicht berücksichtigt werden, sind unter anderem auch jene, die sich auf die *Gattung* (z.B. Dissertation, öffentlicher Vortrag usw.) der erwähnten Texte bezieht, und jene zwischen die Fachzugehörigkeiten ihrer Autoren. Aufgrund dieser letzten Differenz wurde die *kritische Bestandsaufnahme* in Inhetveen 1997 durchgeführt. Da die Autorin schon am Anfang betont, daß sie sich »mit der musiksoziologischen Forschung innerhalb der Disziplin Soziologie« (Inhetveen 1997: 9) beschäftigen möchte, wählt sie von hier erwähnten Arbeiten nur jene aus, deren Autor, Frank Rotter, ein Soziologe ist.

und wenn mittels der *Selbstbeobachtung* der eigene *blinde Fleck* bei der Einführung der Differenz festgestellt wird, die hier besprochenen theoretischen Strömungen scharf voneinander abtrennt, zeigen sich die Beobachtungsergebnisse solcher Beobachtungen als einigermaßen unerwartet. Während man nämlich im Hinblick auf die Arbeiten aus der zweiten oder aus der dritten Gruppe annehmen könnte, daß darin die Differenz zwischen sich selbst und der von ihnen zu beobachtenden Arbeiten nicht thematisiert wird, wären in übriggebliebenen Fällen drastischere Abgrenzungen zu erwarten, insbesondere in der ersten Gruppe. Da aber innerhalb der so skizzierten Unterschiede solche Abgrenzungen nicht festgestellt worden sind, wäre es im weiteren Verlauf mittels der Einführung der Differenz zwischen diesen Beobachtungen und den gegenseitigen Beobachtungen von angegebenen theoretischen Strömungen im Rahmen anderer Disziplinen vielleicht möglich gewesen, andere Ergebnisse zu erzielen.

Solche Beobachtungen von Beobachtungen außerhalb der musikwissenschaftlichen Zusammenhänge sind allerdings außergewöhnlich zahlreich, so daß ich hier wegen des beschränkten Textumfangs gezwungen bin, solche Beobachtungen nur kurz und vereinfacht zu umreißen. Die Differenzen werden in bisherigen Beobachtungen auf unterschiedliche Asymetrisierungen der Oppositionen wie *Konsens/Dissens*, *Humanismus/Antihumanismus*, *Alltags-erfahrung/Distanz hinsichtlich der alltäglichen Erfahrung*, oder *konkret/abstrakt* zurückgeführt, wobei die Systemtheorie in Bezug auf die ELW und den Konstruktivismus die Favorisierung ihren ersten Oppositionspole beanstandet, und umgekehrt. Es werden ebenfalls ihre jeweiligen Unterschiede hinsichtlich der Auffassung des Systembegriffs festgestellt. Während das *System* für die Systemtheorie immer einen differenziellen Begriff in Bezug auf den *Umweltbegriff* darstellt (Luhmann 1984), so daß es wegen einer solchen abstrakten Bestimmung auch auf der Ebene des Sozialen, Psychischen und Physiologischen anwendbar ist, wird seitens der ELW dadurch der konsensuell, intersubjektiv eingespielte Rahmen des menschlichen Handelns bezeichnet (Schmidt 1991), was allerdings aus der Perspektive der Systemtheorie als eine gewisse Reduktion ihres eigenen Entwurfs ersichtlich ist. Die externen Beobachter stellten indessen den Reduktionismus auch im Hinblick auf die Operationalisierung der Systemtheorie im Kontext der Literaturtheorie und Kunstgeschichte fest (Blom/Nijhuis 1995); nicht unbemerkt blieben aber auch die Selbstwidersprüche der ELW und des Konstruktivismus, wie etwa bezüglich ihre Schwierigkeiten mit eigenen antihermeneutischen Proklamationen (Ort 1994), oder im Hinblick auf die Unmöglichkeit, sich selbst zu begründen (Pasternack 1994).³ Als eine eigenartige Antwort wurde seitens

³ Schmidt selbst bekennt, daß die konstruktivistisch ausgerichtete Forschung »ihre eigenen Voraussetzung nie analytisch einholen (kann)« (Schmidt 1997: 55).

der ELW und des Konstruktivismus an die Systemtheorie nebst bereits erwähnten auch noch der Einwand hinsichtlich der Fragwürdigkeit ihres theoretischen Designs serviert (Schmidt 1995).

Die Beobachtung der Differenz zwischen musikwissenschaftlichen und nicht-musikwissenschaftlichen Beobachtungen läßt dadurch erkennen, daß die musikwissenschaftlichen Beobachtungen, da sie voneinander nicht abgegrenzt werden, auf nahezu identische Weise die vorhin angegebenen Oppositionen asymmetrisierten, und zwar so, daß sie sich stillschweigend den seitens der ELW und des Radikalen Konstruktivismus vertretenen Konzeptionen zuwandten. In diese Richtung bewegen sich anscheinend auch die Autoren, die die Terminologie der Systemtheorie explizite beibehalten: Casimir modifiziert beispielsweise die systemtheoretische These über die Geschlossenheit und die gegenseitige Abgegrenztheit sozialer und psychischer Systeme mittels seine Konzeption der *teilweise autonomen Systeme* (Casimir 1991: 216),⁴ Tadday hält ebenfalls die erwähnte These für unannehmbar (Tadday 1997: 30), während Gottwald die Systemtheorie mit der früheren Kritischen Theorie zu versöhnen versucht. Auch Rotter – obgleich von einer früheren Phase der Systemtheorie ausgehend, als sie ihre späteren Thesen über die Selbstreferenz und Autopoiesis der Systeme noch nicht einführt – betrachtet die sozialen Systeme in ihrer notwendigen Verbindung mit psychischen Systemen, so daß er sich daher der Psychoanalyse zuwendet. Es scheint, daß in anderen Fällen die Differenz zwischen der ELW und der Systemtheorie durch deren Verschmelzung in die angeblich gemeinsame konstruktivistische Ausrichtung ausgemerzt worden ist.⁵

Was hat all das mit dem Thema dieser Konferenz zu tun? Es scheint, daß die Beantwortung dieser Frage in gewisser Hinsicht auch die Antwort auf die erste Frage, hinsichtlich der Platzierung *innerhalb/außerhalb* der jeweiligen Disziplin oder Wissenschaft sein könnte. In allen hier erwähnten

⁴ Die Argumentation in Schmidt 1994 scheint wunderbarlich ähnlich.

⁵ Es ist allerdings zu betonen, daß diese Verschmelzung in Müllensiefen 1994 differenzierter und vorsichtiger als in Großmann 1997 durchgeführt ist. Müllensiefen beispielsweise bekennt, daß die Systemtheorie Luhmanns und der Konstruktivismus zwei selbständige Entitäten seien, da sie *verwandt* sind (Müllensiefen 1994: 1). Hinsichtlich der *angeblichen Gemeinsamkeit* der Systemtheorie und des Konstruktivismus ist doch zu sagen, man könnte dieser Bestimmung eine kritische Note nur im Fall der hier unternommenen Beobachtung zuschreiben. Es sollte aber nicht vergessen werden, daß auch in streng systemtheoretisch argumentierenden Arbeiten (z.B. Nassehi 1992) – in denen man die ELW und den Konstruktivismus für das Andere hält – die These anzutreffen ist, daß diese theoretischen Richtungen in gewisser Hinsicht mit der Systemtheorie verwandt seien (vgl. Anm. 1). Das bedeutet allerdings nicht, daß die *feinen Unterschiede*, die Nassehi im erwähnten Text zwischen ihnen einführt, zu vergessen sind.

Entwürfen ist, mehr oder weniger explizite, das Bestreben bemerkbar, die Differenz zwischen sich selbst und dem Rest der Musikwissenschaft und nicht zuletzt auch zwischen den unterschiedlichsten, innerhalb der Musikwissenschaft um die Thematisierung des Bezugsverhältnisses zwischen Musik und Sprache bemühten Theorien anzuführen.⁶ Manche von diesen Musikwissenschaftlern, wie beispielsweise Großmann, lassen die hermeneutischen Konzeptionen überhaupt nicht zum Wissenschaftssystem zu, weil sie der Auffassung sind, daß diese Konzeptionen der Kriterien unwürdig sind, die das jeweilige System herstellt. Wenn z.B. Großmann ihnen deshalb einen Stellenwert im Kunstsystem zuteilt, wird er sie als seine eigenen Gegenstände, beziehungsweise Konstrukte betrachten, deren Konstruiertheit und Kontingenz durch seine Beobachtung entdeckt werden wird. Möglicherweise ist eine solche Beobachtung der Musikwissenschaft tatsächlich interessant, so daß manche, wie Hans-Peter Reinecke, die Ansicht vertreten, daß sie letztendlich auch notwendig geworden ist (Reinecke 1993: 123). Vielleicht ist es ebenfalls interessant hervorzuheben, daß eine ähnliche Rolle des Beobachters der Musikwissenschaft in jüngster Zeit auch einige Autoren für sich reservierten, die mit der amerikanischen Musikanthropologie verwandt sind (Moisala 1986, Kingsbury 1991, Edström 1997). Eine solche Ausrichtung der hier erwähnten Anthropologen sollte zwar nicht so verwunderlich sein, wenn man bedenkt, daß bereits im *kanonischen* Buch der betreffenden Disziplin, *The Anthropology of Music* von Alan Merriam, die These anzutreffen ist, die den Beobachter als jemanden herausstellt, dessen Beobachtung für den zu beobachtenden Gegenstand konstitutiv ist (Merriam 1964: 271; die Beobachtung der Architektur).

Solche musikwissenschaftlichen Beobachtungen lassen sich auch selbst der Beobachtung unterziehen, gerade von der *Leitdifferenz* ausgehend, von welcher hier bereits die Rede war, jene Differenz zwischen der Systemtheorie einerseits und der ELW und des Radikalen Konstruktivismus andererseits. Wie allerdings auch zu erwarten ist, sieht eine solche Beobachtung im Fall der bereits erwähnten musikwissenschaftlichen Entwürfe deren blinden Fleck im Widerspruch zwischen ihrer Auffassung, daß alle anderen Konzeptionen der Musikwissenschaft von der Nähe des eigenen Gegenstands geblendet und deswegen ungenügend selbstkritisch sind, während sie aus ihrer privilegierten wissenschaftlichen Perspektive heraus beobachten können, wie die Dinge *tatsächlich* aussehen, ohne jedoch festzustellen, daß sie da-

⁶ Die Ausnahmen sind Gottwald 1991, wo man explizite die kritischtheoretisch formulierte These über Musik als Sprache behalten wollte, und Mosch 1993, wo der Verfasser sich hauptsächlich mit der *Syntaktik* beschäftigt, vermutlich voraussetzend, daß die Musik mit der Sprache zu vergleichen sei.

durch für sich selbst dasjenige besetzt haben, was sie den anderen bereits verweigert hatten.⁷ Obwohl die Systemtheorie selbst mit vielen Problemen konfrontiert wird, wenn sie beispielsweise die Position der Ästhetik und der Theorie der Kunst bezüglich des Kunstsystems einerseits und des Wissenschaftssystems andererseits bestimmen will, hätte sie hier keineswegs versäumt, auch die Frage nach der Stellenwert der hier besprochenen musikwissenschaftlichen Theorien zu stellen. Abgesehen davon, ob die Musikwissenschaft als Selbstbeschreibung des Kunstsystems betrachtet wird, wie es hinsichtlich der ihr verwandten kunstbezogenen Wissenschaften Luhmann meint (Luhmann 1995), oder des Wissenschaftssystems, was per analogiam hinsichtlich der Thesen des Literaturtheoretikers Niels Werber zu folgern wäre (Werber 1992), könnte man die Abgrenzung der hier erwähnten musikwissenschaftlichen Entwürfe von ihren Konkurrenten vorläufig als die Einführung der Differenz in das System der Musikwissenschaft selbst halten, was hingegen seitens der Systemtheorie gleichzeitig als eine selbstreproduktive Operation des jeweiligen Systems betrachtet worden wäre. Luhmann weist indessen darauf hin, solche rekursive Operationen »kann man allerdings nur im Nachhinein beobachten. Die Ordnung verdankt sich ihrer Evolution, sie ist daher nur als geschichtliches System möglich.« (Luhmann 1989: 11) Das bezieht sich dann auch auf die Entscheidungen bezüglich der Wissenschaftlichkeit, gleichermaßen im Fall der musikwissenschaftlichen Theorien, von denen hier die Rede war, wie auch ihre hermeneutischen Konkurrentinnen. Von der Systemtheorie ausgehend, könnten erst die weiteren kommunikativen Anknüpfungen darüber entscheiden, ob es sich in jedem einzelnen Fall um die Kriterien einer *echten* Wissenschaftlichkeit handelt, oder darum, was Pierre Bourdieu den »Schein der Wissenschaft« bezeichnete, der »mittels des Methoden- und Operationentransfers einer entwickelteren, oder – sagen wir – angeseheneren Wissenschaft erreicht wird« (Bourdieu 1992: 207).

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⁷ Zur systemtheoretischen Position in diesem Fall siehe Nassehi 1992.

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Krzysztof Guczalski
Musik ist keine Sprache – Argumente
Susanne Langers revidiert
(und mit Hilfe der Ideen Nelson Goodmans untermauert).

1. Einleitung

Im achten Kapitel des Buches *Philosophy in a New Key*¹, mit dem Titel »On Significance in Music«, argumentiert Susanne Langer gegen die Auffassung, daß Musik als Sprache in irgendeinem nahezu wörtlichen Sinne zu verstehen ist. Diese Haltung folgt nicht aus einer formalistischen Einstellung, die es im allgemeinen bestreitet, daß der Musik irgendwelche außermusikalische Bedeutungen zustehen. Auch vertritt Langer nicht die Position, daß Musik zwar bedeutsam sein und expressive Qualitäten besitzen kann, aber keine Bedeutungen beinhaltet. Ganz im Gegenteil: sie sieht Musik als ein eindeutig semantisches Phänomen, das Träger emotionaler Bedeutungen ist. Diese Feststellung bedeutet bei ihr, daß Musik nicht als unmittelbares Symptom der Emotionen des Musikers und auch nicht lediglich als ein bei den Zuhörern gewisse Emotionen erregender Anreiz zu interpretieren ist, sondern daß gewisse Bedeutungen an der Musik selbst haften. In Langers Begriffen wird das durch die Feststellung ausgedrückt, daß Musik kein Signal sondern ein Symbol ist. In dieser Hinsicht ist Musik der Sprache ähnlich.

Mit der Anerkennung dieser Ähnlichkeit und mit der Überzeugung über die im Prinzip semantische Natur der Musik geht aber bei Langer eine feste Meinung zusammen, daß die Bedeutungen, welche in der Musik vorkommen, einer ganz anderen Beschaffenheit sind als in der Sprache. Anders gesagt, Musik symbolisiert die Gefühle auf eine ganz andere Art und Weise als die Sprache ihre Bedeutungen.

2. Prolegomena zu einer jeden künftigen Diskussion
über den Sprachcharakter von Musik

Die Argumentation, daß Musik keine Sprache ist, hat in der Diskussion über die Bedeutung der Musik eine relativ wichtige Rolle zu spielen. Zum

¹ Susanne K. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1942, deutsche Ausgabe unter dem Titel: *Philosophie auf neuem Wege*, Frankfurt/Main: Fischer Verlag, 1965.

einen ist die Haltung, daß Musik in Anlehnung an das Paradigma der Sprache zu interpretieren ist und daß eine solche Interpretation aufschlußreich sein kann, keineswegs selten. Zu den Vertretern dieser Position zählen z.B. Deryck Cooke mit seinem Buch *The Language of Music*² und Wilson Coker mit dem Buch *Music and Meaning*³. Auch solche französische Autoren wie Jean-Jacques Nattiez und Nicolas Ruwet haben in einigen Artikeln, wie auch der polnische Musikwissenschaftler Michal Bristiger in seinem Buch *Zwiazki muzyki ze slowem* (*Die Beziehungen der Musik zu den Wörtern*)⁴ diese Auffassung vertreten. Nennen wir diese Position kurz für spätere Verweise: sprachliches Paradigma.

Andererseits stößt manchmal auch eine gemäßigte Position – wie die von Langer – daß Musik gewisse Bedeutungen auf eine nichtsprachliche Weise ausdrückt und einen semantischen Inhalt hat, auf eine vehemente Ablehnung. Man kann vermuten, daß der Grund dafür vielleicht unter anderem darin liegt, daß häufig jede Art der Bedeutung in Anlehnung an das Paradigma der Sprache verstanden wird. Dadurch werden die Verfechter der lediglich semantischen (und nicht unbedingt sprachlichen) Position sofort so verstanden, als würden sie behaupten, daß wir in der Musik genau mit solchen Bedeutungen wie in einer Sprache zu tun haben. Und da solche Vermutung sehr vielen absolut unakzeptabel erscheint, sehen sie sich gezwungen, die Idee, daß Musik überhaupt etwas bedeutet, zu bekämpfen. Um also die Überzeugung, daß Musik ein bedeutendes Phänomen und nicht bloße Dekoration ist, vor solchen Angriffen zu verteidigen, sollte man zu begründen versuchen, daß ihre Bedeutungen eben einer ganz anderen Art als in der Sprache sind.

Man kann im allgemeinen sagen, daß die Argumentation, Musik sei Sprache der Gefühle, im Namen der Bedeutsamkeit der Musik geführt wird (so z.B. Deryck Cooke⁵), die entgegengesetzte Argumentation, daß sie keine Sprache ist, in Namen ihrer Autonomie (und der Autonomie der Kunst im allgemeinen). Wenn sie nämlich eine Sprache wie jede andere wäre, könnte sie vielleicht durch eine Wortsprache ersetzt werden, was ihre Einzigartigkeit untergraben würde. Die Haltung, daß Musik zwar ein semantisches, Bedeutungen beinhaltendes Phänomen ist, das sich aber von der Sprache wesentlich unterscheidet, stellt also einen Mittelweg zwischen den beiden extremen Positionen dar, die beide unakzeptabel erscheinen.

² Deryck Cooke, *The Language of Music*, London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959.

³ Wilson Coker, *Music and Meaning*, New York-London: The Free Press-Collier-Macmillan Limited, 1972.

⁴ Michal Bristiger, *Zwiazki muzyki ze slowem*, Kraków: PWM, 1986. !!!

⁵ Deryck Cooke, *op. cit.*

Die Argumentation, Musik sei keine Sprache, hat eine ähnlich lange Tradition wie das sprachliche Paradigma selbst. Man muß aber sagen, daß die Argumente sehr häufig nicht das bekämpfen, was die Verfechter des sprachlichen Paradigmas bereit zu behaupten wären, und gegen die Haltung der letzteren nicht wirksam sind. Wenn z.B. Werner Jauk unlängst in seinem Artikel »Sprache und Musik: der angebliche Sprachcharakter von Musik«⁶ sagt, Musik sei keine Sprache, da sie nicht Mittel einer intendierten Übermittlung der Kommunikate von einem Sender zu einem Empfänger ist, oder daß sie nicht im Sinne einer Wortsprache, die konkrete Inhalte übermittelt, zu verstehen ist und daß in der Musik keine eindeutige Zuordnungen von Zeichen und Bezeichneten durch wiederholte Koppelungen erlernt werden, wäre es natürlich schwierig, nicht zuzustimmen. Man sollte aber fragen, wer irgendwann diese von Jauk angefochtene Auffassungen vertreten hat.

Daß es Unterschiede zwischen Musik und Sprache gibt, ist offensichtlich. Selbst die Verfechter des sprachlichen Paradigmas würden viele dieser Unterschiede kaum bestreiten. Ihre Haltung könnte man eher wie folgt ausdrücken: auch wenn Musik äußerlich nicht unbedingt sofort wie eine Sprache aussieht, wenn man ihre innere Struktur und ihre Bedeutungen tiefer analysiert, kann man erkennen, daß sie auf eine ähnliche Weise strukturiert sind, wie die Bedeutungen einer Sprache. Diese tieferen Analogien zwischen der semantischen Struktur der Musik und der Sprache sind – ihrer Meinung nach – so weitgehend, daß sie eine Analyse der Musikbedeutungen mit Hilfe des Paradigmas der Sprache rechtfertigen und es erlauben, sich fruchtbare Ergebnisse einer solchen Analyse zu erhoffen. Um diese Analogie zu begründen werden verschiedene Argumente gebracht.

Aus dem Wesen der These von einer *Analogie* zwischen Musik und Sprache folgt, daß Musik eben nicht in wörtlichem Sinne eine Sprache ist, so wie Deutsch oder Englisch, sondern nur, daß sie der Sprache in wichtigen Punkten ähnelt. Das bedeutet aber gleichzeitig, daß auch gewisse Unterschiede existieren. Wenn es keine Unterschiede gäbe, wäre Musik im wörtlichen Sinne eine Sprache, was selbstverständlich von keinem behauptet wird. Die Anhänger und Gegner des sprachlichen Paradigmas können also lange genug die Ähnlichkeiten und die Unterschiede auflisten, beide Gruppen werden auch recht haben, wir werden uns aber durch eine solche Diskussion kaum der Entscheidung nähern. Ein bloßer Verweis auf die Tatsache, daß es gewisse Unterschiede zwischen Sprache und Musik gibt, was selbstverständlich ist, kann als Argument gegen das sprachliche Paradigma auf kei-

⁶ Werner Jauk, »Sprache und Musik: der angebliche Sprachcharakter von Musik«, in: *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 26 (1995) 1, SS. 97 – 106.

nen Fall wirksam sein. Es muß gezeigt werden, daß die Analogien, die von den Anhängern dieses Paradigmas vorgeführt werden, nur scheinbar oder oberflächlich sind und in Wirklichkeit, bei einem genaueren Einblick in wichtigen Punkten brechen. Anders gesagt: ihre Argumente beweisen nicht, was sie zu beweisen meinen und was sie manchmal zu beweisen scheinen.

3. Argumente Susanne Langers untersucht und revidiert

In diesem Aufsatz möchte ich zuerst zeigen, daß die scheinbar überzeugenden Argumente Langers gegen das sprachliche Paradigma sich leider als inkonsistent erweisen. Zum zweiten aber möchte ich versuchen, standfestere und entscheidendere Argumente im Sinne von Langers Position vorzustellen. Ihre Argumentierung, daß Musik keine Sprache ist, fängt sie mit folgender Feststellung an:

Und doch ist sie [die Musik], logisch betrachtet, keine Sprache, denn sie besitzt kein Vokabular. Die Töne einer Tonleiter als »Wörter«, die Harmonie als »Grammatik« und die thematische Entwicklung als »Syntax« zu bezeichnen, ist eine überflüssige Allegorie, denn den Tönen fehlt gerade das, was das Wort von der bloßen Vokabel unterscheidet: die fixierte Konnotation oder »lexikalische Bedeutung«⁷.

Daß Musik kein Vokabular und keine feste Bedeutungen hat ist eine Offensichtlichkeit, die kaum erwähnt werden braucht. Die Anhänger des sprachlichen Paradigmas behaupten nicht, daß sie ein Vokabular hat, sondern eher, daß sie so semantisch funktioniert, als ob sie eins hätte, auch wenn wir uns nicht dessen bewußt sind. Und daß eine aufmerksame und sorgfältige Analyse dieses implizite Vokabular aufdecken könnte. Anders gesagt: auch wenn Musik keine Sprache in wörtlichem Sinne ist und keine expliziten, festen Bedeutungen hat, funktioniert sie *de facto* als ob sie eine wäre und als ob sie gewisse feste, durch die Analyse bloßzulegende Bedeutungen hätte.

Langers vermutliche Erwiderung zu solcher Vermutung kann man aus anderen Thesen ihrer Theorie folgern. Sie unterscheidet nämlich zwischen sogenannten diskursiven (sprachlichen) und präsentativen Symbolen. In dem ersten Fall entstehen die Bedeutungen eines zusammengesetzten Symbols aus den Einzelbedeutungen seiner einfachen Elemente nach gewissen Regeln der Syntax. In dem zweiten – und das paradigmatische Beispiel hierzu ist für Langer eine visuelle Darstellung – haben die einzelnen Elemente eines Symbols keine eigenständige Bedeutung: sie erlangen ihre Bedeutun-

⁷ Susanne K. Langer, *op. cit.* S. 225 (Alle Zitate nach der deutschen Ausgabe: *Philosophie auf neuem Wege*, Frankfurt/Main: Fischer Verlag, 1965)

gen erst im Kontext der gesamten Struktur des Bildes: separat betrachtet sind sie nur Farbflecken, die in verschiedenen Zusammenhängen ganz unterschiedliche Sachen darstellen, d.h. ganz verschiedene Bedeutungen haben könnten. In Langers Worten:

... die Bedeutungen aller anderen [nicht-linguistischen] symbolischen Elemente, die zusammen ein größeres, artikuliertes Symbol bilden, werden nur durch die Bedeutung des Ganzen verstanden, durch ihre Beziehungen innerhalb der ganzheitlichen Struktur.⁸

Auch Musik ist nach Langers Auffassung ein präsentatives Symbol. Sie präsentiert in ihrer Struktur die zeitlich-dynamische Formen des Ablaufs unseres Gefühlslebens. Durch diese Analogie der logischen Form wird sie als symbolisch für unsere Gefühle wahrgenommen und empfangen, wodurch sie ihre emotionale Bedeutung erlangt. Daraus folgt, daß die Bedeutungen in der Musik nur gewissen strukturierten Ganzheiten und nicht ihren Einzelementen zustehen. Die letzteren sind – aus dem Zusammenhang herausgenommen – bedeutungslos. Deshalb – so würde Langer wohl argumentieren – sind alle Versuche, ein Vokabular – also einzelne, feste Grundbausteine der Bedeutung – durch Analyse aufzudecken, ein aussichtsloses und fehlgerichtetes Unterfangen, das auf völlig falschen Prämissen beruht.

Darauf könnte man erwidern, daß aus der These, daß erst gewisse Strukturen Träger der Bedeutungen sind, nicht folgt, daß man über eine Bedeutung erst im Bezug auf ein gesamtes Musikstück bzw. mindestens auf ein geschlossener Teil davon sprechen kann. Aus dieser These folgt lediglich, daß nur an solchen Gebilden Bedeutung haften kann, die eine Struktur aufweisen. Dies muß nicht notwendigerweise das ganze Musikwerk sein. In der Tat haben schon zwei aufeinander folgende Töne oder ein einfaches rhythmisches Motiv eine gewisse – wenn auch simple – Struktur. Ja, sogar ein Klang mit einer wechselnden Dynamik – wenn er z.B. leise anfängt, dann an der Lautstärke zunimmt und schließlich abrupt abbricht; oder aber wieder leiser wird und allmählich ausklingt – kann als strukturiert angesehen werden. Wenn die sprachlich eingestellten Denker ein emotionales Vokabular der Musik aufzudecken und zu formulieren trachten, suchen sie nach den Elementarbedeutungen keineswegs in isolierten Tönen, sondern eben in einfachen Strukturen dieser Art. Der prominenteste und umfangreichste Versuch, dieses implizite Vokabular bloßzulegen, ist wahrscheinlich der von Deryck Cooke, der in seinem Buch *The Language of Music* musikalische Figuren identifizierte, die mit ähnlicher Ausdrucksqualität in verschiedenen

⁸ Susanne K. Langer, *op. cit.* S. 103

Musikwerken vorkommen. Langer selbst erwähnt ähnliche, auf die Musik von Bach begrenzte Versuche von Albert Schweitzer und André Pirro.

Zur Zurückweisung dieses Ansatzes bezieht sich Langer auf die Feststellungen Kurt Hubers, die in seiner Studie zur Psychologie der Musik unter dem Titel *Ausdruck musikalischer Elementarmotive* enthalten sind. Im Gegensatz zu dem, was der Titel vermuten lassen würde, scheint aus seinen Feststellungen zu folgen, daß die Unterscheidung von einfachen Grundelementen des musikalischen Ausdrucks, aus welchen sich die Expression grösserer Gebilde zusammensetzen würde, nicht möglich ist. Langer sagt:

Solche genauen Ausdeutungen einzelner Figuren sind deshalb nicht überzeugend, weil es – wie Huber in seiner psychologischen Studie bemerkt – unmöglich ist, den absoluten Ausdrucksgehalt der einzelnen Intervalle (Terzen, Quarten und Quinten usw.) zu bestimmen; da die absolute Tonhöhe die Klanghelligkeit ihrer Bestandteile beeinflußt und somit auch die Qualitäten des Kontrastes, der Faßlichkeit usw.⁹

Anders gesagt, man kann die Ausdrucksqualität eines Intervalls, z.B. einer Terz, im allgemeinen nicht bestimmen, da diese Qualität von der absoluten Höhe, auf welcher dieses Intervall erklingt, von der Farbe des jeweiligen Klangmaterials usw. abhängig ist. Diese These könnte man noch durch eine Bemerkung verstärken, daß die Ausdrucksqualität eines Intervalls weiterhin noch von seiner Funktion in der Entwicklung einer melodischen Linie – oder allgemein gesagt, vom Kontext in welchem es auftritt – abhängig ist. In Langers Worten: von seinen Beziehungen innerhalb der ganzheitlichen Struktur. Eine musikalische Figur hat also in verschiedenen Kontexten und Ausführungen keine feste Ausdrucksqualität. Für Langer scheint daraus eindeutig zu folgen, daß alle Versuche, ein emotionales Vokabular der Musik zu entdecken, also Elemente mit festen Ausdrucksqualitäten, mit festen Bedeutungen, aus welchen sich die Bedeutung ihrer Zusammensetzungen ergibt, von vornherein zum scheitern verurteilt sind.

Wenn man aber diese Argumente genauer betrachtet, scheint es, daß sie auch auf die Sprache zutreffen könnten, selbstverständlich ohne den Schluß zu implizieren, daß ihr ein festgelegtes Vokabular fehlt. Das erste Argument von Huber besagt, daß die Ausdrucksqualität einer Terz auf verschiedenen Tonhöhen – im allgemeinen: in ihren verschiedenen Ausführungen – nicht identisch ist. Dasselbe könnte man auch über die Bedeutung eines Wortes sagen, das mit verschiedener Intonation ausgesprochen wurde. Daraus folgt aber nicht, daß es keine feste Bedeutung hat. Ein Wort hat eben eine feste Bedeutung, die in allen Akten seines Aussprechens präsent und eindeutig mit dem geschriebenen Wort verbunden ist.

⁹ Susanne K. Langer, *op. cit.* S. 228

Zurück zu Musik: es wäre schwierig zu widersprechen, daß ein auf verschiedenen Höhen oder Instrumenten gespieltes Intervall oder eine Melodie – auch wenn sie nicht in allen diesen Ausführungen eine genau gleiche Expression besitzen – dann doch eine gewisse, eindeutig erkennbare und immer ähnliche Ausdrucksqualität bewahren. Wenn es wiederum um den Kontexteinfluß auf die Bedeutung geht, haben wir auch in der Sprache mit einem solchen Phänomen zu tun. Langer selbst macht sogar eine Bemerkung, die man so verstehen könnte, als ob dieser Einfluß genauso wie in der Musik wäre:

... hinzukommt noch ein beachtliches Moment: daß sie [musikalische Motive] in der Kombination eines des anderen Charakter wechselseitig modifizieren, ganz wie die Wörter auch, indem alle für jedes einzelne einen Kontext bilden.¹⁰

Es scheint eher klar zu sein, daß der Einfluß des Kontextes auf die Wortbedeutungen und auf den Ausdruck musikalischer Phrasen weder in seiner Art noch in seinem Umfang gleich ist. Wenn wir aber zugeben, daß der Kontexteinfluß auf die Wortbedeutungen existiert, woraus nicht folgt, daß die Worte keine feste Bedeutungen haben, dann beweist dieses Argument in Bezug auf den musikalischen Ausdruck auch nicht, daß man sein Vokabular nicht identifizieren und formulieren kann. Man könnte sogar überspitzt sagen, daß die Leistung Deryck Cookes genau das Gegenteil konklusiv beweist. Um also überzeugende Argumente dafür zu finden, daß das von Cooke vorgestellte Vokabular des musikalischen Ausdrucks kein Beweis liefert, daß Musik in ihrer tieferen Struktur wie eine Sprache funktioniert, muß man genauer die Rolle eines Vokabulars in einem semantischen System, im besonderen in der Sprache und in der Musik, analysieren.

4. Auf der Suche nach neuen Argumenten – dichte und diskrete Symbolsysteme

Bevor ich dazu übergehe, möchte ich noch folgende Bemerkung machen: ich werde die Bestimmungen Cookes, die die Ausdrucksqualität verschiedener musikalischen Motive betreffen, nicht in Frage stellen. Eine solche Kritik, die zwar möglich ist (sie wurde z.B. von Donald Ferguson in dem Appendix zu seinem Buch *Music as Metaphor*¹¹ geübt), würde uns wahrscheinlich kaum der Lösung unseres Problems näherbringen. Auch wenn wir diesen oder jenen konkreten Bestimmungen Cookes nicht zustimmen, kann

¹⁰ Susanne K. Langer, *op. cit.* S. 225

¹¹ Donald N. Ferguson, *Music As Metaphor: The Elements of Expression*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1960, SS. 191-195.

man doch mit ziemlicher Konfidenz annehmen, daß in der Musik wohl Figuren oder Elemente auftreten, die einen gewissen Grundausdruck in verschiedenen Ausführungen und Zusammenhängen bewahren (angeführt wird beispielweise die selbstverständliche Unterscheidung zwischen Dur und Moll). Die Frage lautet also: warum kann ein Inventar solcher Figuren – in der von Deryck Cooke vorgeschlagenen oder einer anderen Form – nicht als Vokabular des musikalischen Ausdrucks angesehen werden?

Um diese Frage zu beantworten, kann man gewisse Ideen und Unterscheidungen benutzen, die mit denen aus Nelson Goodmans Buch *Languages of Art*¹² verwandt sind. In dem vierten Kapitel dieses Buches unter dem Titel »The Theory of Notation« unterscheidet Goodman zwischen sogenannten dichten und endlich differenzierten Symbolsystemen, die man anders diskret nennen kann, auch wenn Goodman selbst diese Bezeichnung nicht benutzt. Die Notationen der natürlichen Sprachen – z.B. das lateinische oder kyrillische Alphabet – sind nach Goodman endlich differenziert oder diskret. Ein dichtes Symbolsystem dagegen bilden beispielweise die Anzeigen eines Thermometers, wo jeder noch so kleine Unterschied in der Höhe der Quecksilbersäule einen Unterschied der Temperatur bedeutet. Allgemein gesagt sind prinzipiell alle sogenannten Analoganzeiger, als Symbolsysteme betrachtet, dicht. Im Bezug auf die Kunst hält Goodman Malerei für ein dichtes Symbolsystem, wo auch, ähnlich wie im Falle des Thermometers, jeder kleinste Unterschied, jede kleinste Veränderung der visuellen, sinnlich wahrnehmbaren Gestalt für die Bedeutung des Bildes wichtig sein kann.

Diese intuitiv, anhand der Beispiele, dargestellte Idee der Unterscheidung zwischen dichten und diskreten Symbolsystemen ist aber alles, was uns Goodman zu bieten hat: er vermag sie nicht richtig zu formulieren und in konsistente formale Begriffe umzusetzen. Die von ihm vorgeschlagene formale Definitionen der endlich differenzierten und dichten Symbolsysteme sind logisch fehlerhaft und unbrauchbar. Deshalb werde ich diese Definitionen hier nicht zitieren, da sie uns nicht von Nutzen wären. Darüber hinaus ist Goodmans Betrachtung der Musik auf ihre Notation begrenzt, was in diesem Fall zur Analyse ihrer Bedeutung nichts beiträgt. Eine völlige Neuformulierung der Idee Goodmans würde den Rahmen dieses Aufsatzes sprengen. Versuchen wir aber, diese Idee ein bißchen näher zu betrachten und sie so weit (anders als Goodman) zu explizieren, wie es zur Lösung unseres Problems nötig ist.

Wenn man irgendwelche Symbolsysteme ganz allgemein betrachtet, sind sie zuerst Mengen von physikalischen Objekten (man kann sie,

¹² Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art*, Indianapolis-New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1968.

Goodman folgend, Marken nennen), denen gewisse Bedeutungen – darüber, was sie selbst bloß sind – zustehen. Jede solche Marke zusammen mit ihrer Bedeutung kann als Symbol angesehen werden. In manchen Systemen werden aber gewisse Marken gleichgesetzt und als äquivalent betrachtet. So z.B. in einem Alphabet werden verschiedene Aufschriften eines Buchstabens (d.h. verschiedene materielle Objekte, die fast identisch, oder aber ziemlich unterschiedlich aussehen können) als äquivalent und gleichbedeutend betrachtet. Auf diese Weise werden Äquivalenzklassen von gewissen Marken gebildet. In einem solchen Fall könnte man vielleicht, wie Goodman es tut, solche Äquivalenzklassen als eigentliche Symbole eines Systems betrachten. Die Bedeutung eines Symbols wird dann mit einer solchen Klasse verbunden, in dem Sinne, daß jeder Marke dieser Klasse diese, also für alle Marken dieselbe, Bedeutung zusteht. Man könnte auch sagen, daß die Gleichheit der Bedeutungen der Hauptgrund für die Gleichsetzung gewisser Marken ist: es hat ja keinen Sinn zwischen verschiedenen, auch anders aussehenden Aufschriften eines Buchstabens oder eines Wortes zu unterscheiden und sie als verschiedene Symbole zu betrachten, wenn ihre semantische Funktion genau die gleiche ist.

Die Gleichsetzung der Marken kann nach verschiedenen Prinzipien erfolgen, die nicht unbedingt ein diskretes System ergeben müssen. Wenn z.B. genau die gleiche Höhe der Quecksilbersäule auf verschiedenen Thermometern natürlicherweise als ein und dasselbe Symbol verstanden wird, wird dadurch dieses Symbolsystem immer noch nicht diskret. Andererseits ist unseres Alphabet mit einer begrenzten Anzahl der Symbole diskret. Wenn in einem Symbolsystem keine Gleichsetzungskonventionen im Spiel sind, funktioniert jede einzelne Marke – als materielles Objekt betrachtet – als ein getrenntes Symbol. In einem solchen Fall können alle wahrnehmbaren Merkmale dieser Marke auf ihre Bedeutung Einfluß haben. Die Marke bedeutet dann durch alles, was und wie sie ist. In den Systemen dagegen, wo gewisse Marken gleichgesetzt werden, spielen ihre sinnlich wahrnehmbare Merkmale nur insoweit eine Rolle, insofern sie für die Zuordnung zu einer gewissen Äquivalenzklasse nötig sind, d.h. die Marke als dieses oder jenes Symbol zu identifizieren erlauben. Alles weitere ist für die Bedeutung irrelevant. So ist z.B. im Falle der Temperaturanzeige die Breite oder die Farbe der Quecksilbersäule unerheblich. Und für die Identifizierung einer Marke als ein gewisser Buchstabe sind viele weitere Qualitäten, wie z.B. ihre absolute Größe, irrelevant.

Die Systeme, in welchen keine Gleichsetzungskonventionen funktionieren, könnte man als dicht in strengem Sinne bezeichnen – was bedeuten würde, daß nach einer noch anzugebenden allgemeinen Definition der

Dichte auch manche Systeme mit Gleichsetzungskonventionen, wie z.B. die Temperaturanzeigen, als dicht gelten könnten.

5. Warum kann man in der Musik kein Vokabular der emotionalen Bedeutungen entdecken?

Wenn wir jetzt zu unserem Problem zurückkehren, können wir auf folgende Weise Langers Betrachtungen fortsetzen. Sie sagt uns, daß es nicht möglich sei, ein Vokabular der expressiven Bedeutungen der Musik zu formulieren, da die Ausdrucksqualität jeder einzelnen Figur von ihrer jeweiligen Ausführung (von der Höhe, Klangfarbe, vermutlich auch von der Dynamik und mehreren weiteren Faktoren) und von ihrer Funktion in einem strukturierten Ganzem, oder einfacher gesagt vom Kontext, abhängig ist. Wie aber schon ausgeführt bewahren auch in diesem Fall viele musikalische Figuren in verschiedenen Realisierungen eine gewisse konstante, grundlegende Ausdrucksqualität, ähnlich wie auch Worte in verschiedenen Aussagen oder Aufschriften immer eine gewisse, feste Bedeutungen haben. Diese Grundausdrucksqualität war die Basis des von Deryck Cooke formulierten Vokabulars.

Mit Hilfe der oben vorgestellten Unterscheidung zwischen dichten und diskreten Symbolsystemen können wir uns jetzt klarmachen, warum eine musikalische Figur trotzdem nicht als Wort angesehen werden kann und nicht wie ein Wort funktioniert. Ein Wort ist eine Klasse aller seiner Aufschriften und Akten des Aussprechens, die alle als »gleiches Wort«, als ein und dasselbe Symbol betrachtet werden. Dadurch haben alle diese Aufschriften eine Bedeutung – die, welche dem Wort als Klasse verstanden, zusteht. In der Musik aber, werden – anders als in der Sprache – verschiedene Ausführungen einer Figur nicht miteinander gleichgesetzt. Um uns dessen bewußt zu werden, kann man sich fragen, was es heißen würde, wenn wir verschiedene Ausführungen einer musikalischen Figur tatsächlich gleichsetzen würden. In einem solchen Fall würden zwei so gleichgesetzte Marken ein Symbol vertreten und folglich beide nur eine, gemeinsame Bedeutung haben, die dem Symbol als Klasse zusteht. Wenn aber die Bedeutung einer musikalischen Figur seine Ausdrucksqualität ist, dann ist sie eben in verschiedenen Ausführungen nicht genau gleich, auch wenn sie ähnlich ist. Nehmen wir als Beispiel Goldberg Variationen gespielt von Wanda Landowska, von Glenn Gould und dann noch von einem Musikschüler – man kann selbstverständlich nicht sagen, daß sie alle gleiche Bedeutung vermitteln, da der Ausdruck dieser drei Aufführungen klarerweise unterschiedlich ist.

Anders betrachtet könnte man auch sagen, daß verschiedene Marken dann gleichgesetzt werden können, wenn sie für gleichbedeutend gehalten werden. In der Musik haben wir aber keine funktionierenden Regeln zur Identifizierung der Bedeutung, wie in der Sprache, wo wir z.B. sagen können, daß die Wörter »Hund« und »dog« die gleiche Bedeutung haben, da sie den gleichen Begriff herbeirufen. Die expressive Bedeutung einer musikalischen Phrase ist ihre Ausdrucksqualität. Diese ist mit der Phrase in ihrer konkreten Gestalt und Ausführung, mit allen konkreten Klangqualitäten, untrennbar verbunden. In diesem Sinne haben zwei musikalische Phrasen nur dann gleiche Bedeutung, wenn sie genau gleich klingen; d.h. wenn sie für die Wahrnehmung praktisch identisch sind. Anders gesagt, man kann die Identität der Bedeutung in der Musik nicht mit dem Verweis auf etwas Außerklangliches begründen – man kann es also nur mit dem Verweis auf die Identität der Marken selbst, also der konkreten Klangereignissen, tun. Das heißt wiederum, daß eine musikalische Figur in verschiedenen Ausführungen verschiedene, auch wenn manchmal ähnliche, Bedeutungen hat. Sie kann also nicht als ein und dasselbe Symbol – das durch verschiedene Marken vertreten wird – verstanden werden.

Um Mißverständnisse vorzubeugen sollte man vielleicht sagen, daß in der Musik selbstverständlich gewisse Identifizierungsregeln von verschiedenem Klangmaterial funktionieren. Ohne dies könnte man die Musik gar nicht notieren. Man sagt z.B., daß die *gleiche* Melodie in verschiedenen Tonarten oder mit verschiedenen Instrumenten gespielt werden kann. Und sicherlich werden alle richtigen Aufführungen eines Musikwerkes miteinander identifiziert in dem Sinne, daß sie alle das gleiche Musikwerk vertreten. Aber selbstverständlich können verschiedene Aufführungen eines Musikwerkes unterschiedliche Ausdrucksqualitäten, also unterschiedliche Bedeutungen, haben. Wir können sie also nicht als *ein* Symbol, als verschiedene »Aufschriften« oder Marken *eines* Symbols betrachten. Das bedeutet weiterhin, das ein Symbol in der Musik nicht mit einem Musikwerk gleichzusetzen ist. Musik, wie sie tatsächlich funktioniert und verstanden wird, bildet ein dichtes Symbolsystem, wo auch die kleinsten Unterschiede der Klangqualitäten für die Bedeutung wesentlich sind, wo also jede klangliche Marke, somit auch jede Aufführung eines Musikwerkes, als ein getrenntes Symbol betrachtet wird. Verschiedene Musikereignisse werden nicht wegen der Gleichheit der Bedeutungen, sondern wegen der Erfordernisse der Notation gleichgesetzt. Und die Notation, die ihrerseits diskret ist, hat letztendlich den funktionierenden Begriff des Musikwerkes am wesentlichsten mitgestaltet.

Wenn wir jetzt nach diesen Bestimmungen noch einmal zu der Idee eines Vokabulars des musikalischen Ausdrucks zurückkehren, können wir folgendes beobachten: mit dem Begriff des Vokabulars eines semantischen Systems ist die Vorstellung verbunden – wie Langer bemerkte – daß die »Wörter«, d.h. Elemente dieses Vokabulars, Grundbausteine der Bedeutung sind, aus welcher sich die Bedeutungen größerer Symbole zusammensetzen. Um die Bedeutungen der zusammengesetzten Symbole aus der Bedeutungen der Grundelemente zu konstruieren, muß es möglich sein, diese Elemente in der Struktur größerer Symbole zu identifizieren. Wir müssen sagen können: hier haben wir ein »Wort« (eine musikalische Figur) und da tritt dieses »Wort« in einem Musikwerk auf. Das aber bedeutet genau, daß man gewisse Teile größerer Symbole mit anderen Fällen des Auftretens dieser »Wörter« gleichsetzen muß. Anders gesagt, es müssen eben gewisse Konventionen der Gleichsetzung zwischen verschiedenen Marken (d.h. materiellen Objekten) vorhanden sein, die besagen, daß zwei an verschiedenen Stellen auftretende Marken ein Symbol und somit eine Bedeutung vertreten. Solche Konventionen funktionieren aber in der Musik eben nicht. Aus dieser Überlegung folgt, daß man in einem System, das dicht in strengem Sinne ist, d.h. wo keine Gleichsetzungskonventionen funktionieren, aus prinzipiellen Gründen kein Vokabular entdecken kann.

Zu dieser Argumentation würden die Anhänger des sprachlichen Paradigmas vielleicht sagen, daß sie sehr wohl gleiche Figuren oder Elemente in verschiedenen Musikwerken identifizieren können. Wenn wir es momentan um des Argumentes willen akzeptieren und solche Figuren als Elemente eines Musikvokabulars betrachten würden, sollte es möglich sein, die Bedeutung eines Musikwerkes aus solchen Grundbedeutungen zu konstruieren. Wir sollten also versuchen, uns den Ausdruck des Werkes aufgrund der Ausdruckqualitäten seiner getrennt betrachteten Bausteine vorzustellen. Da sie – wie schon früher beobachtet – im Kontext des Werkes einen etwas anderen Ausdruck haben können, kann man vermuten, daß das Ergebnis solcher Kombination der Grundaussdrücke nur annäherungsweise den Ausdruck des Werkes widerspiegeln würde. Vielleicht wäre aber der Unterschied so klein, daß man es trotzdem berechtigterweise als die Bedeutung des Musikwerkes anerkennen könnte? Um diese Frage entscheiden zu können, müßten wir wissen, was es heißt, daß zwei Bedeutungen gleich sind, d.h. würden wir ein Kriterium für die Gleichheit der Bedeutungen brauchen. Ein solches Kriterium funktioniert in Musik aber nicht, wie wir gesehen haben (außer der Feststellung, daß zwei genau gleich klingende Aufführungen gleiche Bedeutung haben).

Wir sehen also, daß uns alle Überlegungen bezüglich eines Vokabulars des musikalischen Ausdrucks zum Schluß bringen, daß ein solches in der Musik aus prinzipiellen Gründen – wegen der Dichte des Symbolsystems – nicht funktionieren kann. Das heißt aber nicht, daß es keine allgemeine Prinzipien des musikalischen Ausdrucks, wie sie von Deryck Cooke dargestellt wurden, gibt. Sie funktionieren aber nicht wie ein Vokabular in einer Sprache, wegen des grundlegend anderen Aufbaus des dichten Symbolsystems der Musik und des diskreten Symbolsystems der Sprache. Die in der Musik fehlenden Konventionen der Gleichsetzung zwischen den Marken könnte man natürlich einführen, z.B. durch die Festlegung für gewisse musikalische Figuren, daß jede in allen ihren konkreten Ausführungen und Kontexten als ein und dasselbe, gleichbedeutende Symbol betrachtet wird (man könnte z.B. festlegen, daß die Bedeutung einer Figur in allen Kontexten mit ihrem Ausdruck in Tonart C-Dur, auf einem Klavier ausgeführt, gleich ist). Es wäre sozusagen eine Einfrierung eines natürlichen Grundausdrucks dieser Figur. Mit Hilfe eines derartigen Vokabulars könnten wir musikalische Darstellungen der Gefühle konstruieren. Ein solches System könnte man vielleicht damit vergleichen, was tatsächlich bei dem Komponieren banaler Filmmusik gemacht wird: gewisse feste, immer gleiche Elemente eines begrenzten Standardrepertoires der expressiven Formeln werden da kombiniert, um diese oder jene Filmstimmung zu illustrieren.

Durch die Einführung der Gleichsetzungskonventionen würden wir also ein Symbolsystem bekommen, wo die expressiven Bedeutungen mindestens teilweise fixiert und festgelegt sind. Eine beliebig nuancierte, beliebig genaue und spezifische Expression wäre dort nicht mehr möglich. Es wäre ein teilweise konventionalisiertes, denotatives, undichtetes und mindestens in seiner Grundform künstlerisch uninteressantes System, das sich in seinem Funktionieren grundlegend von der Musik, wie wir sie verstehen und betrachten, unterscheiden würde.

Um ganz allgemein unsere Ergebnisse bezüglich des Funktionierens eines Vokabulars in einem Symbolsystem zusammenzufassen, kann man folgendes sagen: ein solches Vokabular kann nur in solchen Systemen vorhanden sein, wo gewisse Konventionen der Gleichsetzung zwischen Marken, und damit Symbole als Klassen der äquivalenten Marken, funktionieren. Man kann also zugespitzt sagen: ein Vokabular in einem Symbolsystem kann man nicht entdecken, wenn es dort nicht explizit funktioniert. Man kann es höchstens festlegen. Das führt aber zu einem ganz anderen Symbolsystem, das sich grundlegend von dem ursprünglichen System ohne Vokabular unterscheidet.

Zum Schluß sollte man vielleicht noch bemerken, daß das oben besprochene Phänomen selbstverständlich das Thema der Unterschiede zwischen Sprache und Musik bei weitem nicht ausschöpft. Diese Unterschiede sind, wie am Anfang des Aufsatzes gesagt wurde, ganz offensichtlich vielfältig. Meine Frage lautete eher: warum zeigen die scheinbaren Ähnlichkeiten, die von den Anhängern des sprachlichen Paradigmas vorgeführt werden, im wesentlichen nicht, daß Musik wie eine Sprache funktioniert; und wie man tiefergehende Unterschiede unter der Oberfläche dieser äußeren Ähnlichkeiten aufspüren kann. Diese Frage verfolgend habe ich mich auf einem Aspekt des Problems, das aus der Argumentation Langers folgt, nämlich auf der Rolle und dem Funktionieren eines Vokabulars in einem Symbolsystem, konzentriert. Man kann ja nur eine Sache auf einmal behandeln.

Werner Jauk
Musikalisches Sprechen
Interaktion – Strukturierung durch kommunizierendes Verhalten

Einleitung

»Musik als Sprache« impliziert meist die Betrachtung von Musik als Wortsprache, die ein eindeutiges Codesystem zur Vermittlung von Gedanken darstellt und letztlich Denken repräsentieren dürfte. Die schriftlich fixierte Sprache als der am meisten kontrollierte Code, legt formalisiertes Denken frei und ermöglicht exakten forschenden Zugang. Das Werk verleitet zur Analogiebildung und damit zur Untersuchung des mit der schriftlichen Fixierung von Musik entstandenen vollkommensten Code einer musikalischen Idee, oftmals willkürlich algorithmisch geregelt. Unabhängig voneinander gefundene Parallelen in zutiefst liegenden Strukturen der Sprache und Musik verstärken die experimentell orientierte Forschung darin, jene im Umfeld von absolutem Verständnis der Musik postulierten Gemeinsamkeiten prüfend zu erforschen.

N. CHOMSKY's (1957, 1965, 1968) generative Grammatik basiert darauf, daß »at a deep level, all natural languages have the same structure, and this structure tells us something universal about the human intellect« (J. SLOBODA 1985 S. 12), H. SCHENKER's (1935) wertende analytische Betrachtung von Musik führt zu dem Schluß, daß »at a deep level, all good musical compositions have the same type of structure, and that this structure reveals to us something about the nature of musical intuition« (J. SLOBODA 1985 S. 12).

Die Tiefe und Allgemeingültigkeit jener Gemeinsamkeit in Sprache und Musik läßt vermuten, daß es sich um allgemeine menschliche Äußerungen handelt, denen Denken zugrundeliegt. Die Analyse beider, auch der Musik, legt Denken frei.

»The same relationship to a musical sequence as a thought bears to a linguistic sequence« (J. SLOBODA 1985 S. 20) ist in der treibenden Kraft von Spannung – Lösung zu vermuten, wie sie narrativen Strukturen zugrundeliegt. Im SCHENKER'schen (1935) Ursatz sei dieses Verhältnis (für die abendländische Musik) optimal verwirklicht. Vom Dreiklang der Grundstufe, dem »ultimate resting place in music« (J. SLOBODA 1985 S.21) ausgehend drängt es nach motivierter Irritation wieder zu diesem zurück. Diese

»creation and resolution of motivated tension« (ebd. S. 22) sei die zutiefstliegende musikalische Universalität, vergleichbar dem Gedanken in der Sprache.

Vor allem die Suche nach parallelen Strukturen impliziert oftmals die Suche im Werk, da »the grammatical structure is actually made more explicit in the notated form than in the spoken form (J. SLOBODA 1985 S. 19). Satzzeichen übernehmen diese Strukturierung, andere Ordnungsgrößen sind dem Text explizit vorangestellt, die aus dem Sprechen erst zu extrahieren sind. Dieser lesende Zugang zur musikalischen Sprache unterschätzt den Informationswert interpretatorischer Größen.

Die psychologische Bedeutsamkeit ist Kriterium für den Erklärungswert der Anwendung des Modells der Wortsprache auf Musik, theoretischer Annahmen wie experimenteller Befunde über die emotionale Expression im Musikalischen (vgl. W. JAUKE 1995) wie schließlich der Übertragung nonverbaler Kommunikation auf das Musizieren. Die Beobachtung des Werdens von Struktur und ihrer Regelmäßigkeit ist der methodische Nutzen der Analyse freier kollektiver Musizierformen. Auf die Computersimulation nonverbaler Kommunikation als Gestaltungsmittel und die Genese künstlerischer Ereignisse durch Interaktion in den technoiden elektronischen Künsten soll hingewiesen werden.

Musik als Wortsprache?

In Anlehnung an J. SLOBODA (1985) wird die psychologische Relevanz des hierarchischen Modells von Phonetik, Syntax und Semantik an Parallelen in der Wahrnehmung von Wortsprache und Musik geprüft.

Phoneme gelten als kleinste Klangteile der Sprache; sie werden kategorial wahrgenommen. Als die Wahrnehmung von Zeitphänomenen ist die Wahrnehmung eine beziehende. Einschwingvorgänge werden erst nach dem Hören des folgenden stationären Anteils »bedeutsam« für die kategoriale Erkennung von Phonemen (I. E. MATTINGLEY, A. M. LIBERMAN, A. K. SYRDAL und T. HAWLES 1971) wie musikalischen Klängen (J. E. CUTTING, B. S. ROSNER und C. F. FOARD 1976).

Grundklassifikationskonzepte von musikalischen Klängen sind Tonhöhe und Tondauer. Auch diese werden kategorial wahrgenommen; sprachliche und musikalische Grundkategorien unterliegen Lernprozessen, absolutes Tonhöhen-Hören ist die gelernte Assoziation von Kategorien mit prototypischen Frequenzbändern.

Zusätzlich zu diesen Parallelen erhält bereits die Wahrnehmung von kleinsten Einheiten in der Musik eine spezifische Bedeutung.

In ihrer Funktion liegt der Unterschied zwischen den kleinsten Teilen der Sprache und der Musik. Für Sprache ist das Phonem Mittel zum Zweck, zum Transport von Information, für Musik ist diese kleinste Einheit Mittel zum Selbstzweck. Bei kontextueller Mitbestimmung beider entstehen Bedeutungen sprachlicher Einheiten durch das Zusammenfügen der Bedeutungen der Elemente, mögliche Bedeutungen musikalischer Einheiten sind nur durch die Stellung der Elemente zueinander, durch Beziehungen gegeben.

Die Reihung von Phonemen wie Klängen unterliegt einer sinngebenden syntaktischen Ordnung. Experimente sowohl mit Sprache (J. A. FODOR, T. G. BEVER 1965 und P. LADEFOGED, D. E. BROADBENT 1960) als auch mit Musik (A. H. GREGORY 1978 und J. SLOBODA, A. H. GREGORY 1980) belegen die prinzipiell gliedernde Wahrnehmung von Reihen in der Zeit. In der Musik kann die Akzeptanz willkürlich bestimmter musiktheoretischer Ordnungsgrößen durch Lernen nicht ausgeschlossen werden.

Wahrnehmung ist prinzipiell relational (G. Th. FECHNER 1859). Die beziehende Wahrnehmung von Tondauerunterschieden sequentieller Töne (H. WOODROW 1951) ist die Wahrnehmung von Rhythmus. Musik ist in ihrer Zeitstruktur durch Beziehungen bestimmt, aber auch in den anderen Dimensionen ihres Gefüges.

»Its the relationship of elements to one another within...structures, rather than their temporal or spatial proximity that determines whether or not they are psychologically close« (J. SLOBODA 1985 S 66) Diese Conclusion untermauert jene Postulate wahrnehmungsmäßig, die spätestens seit H. RIEMANN (1914/15) (absolute) Musik als »beziehendes Denken« sehen.

Freiheitsgrade in der Sprache bedeuten die Gefahr des Mißverständnisses; im Musikalischen können diese Freiheitsgrade das spannungsreiche Spiel mit Erwartungen sein. Für Sprache »is Syntax a vehicle for communicating knowledge. Art music, in contrast, has no such clearly defined function. Syntax becomes, in itself, an object of aesthetetic awareness« (J. SLOBODA, 1985 S 38).

BERLYNEs experimentelle Ästhetik (1971, 1974) führt »beziehendes Denken« und die lustvolle Besetztheit von Spannungs-Lösungs-Prozessen zusammen. Im ästhetischen Wohlgefallen ist die subjektive Empfindung von Struktur dem Spannungs-Lösungsprinzip unterworfen.

Syntax hat also direkt Bedeutung: Musik kommuniziert Emotion durch kompositorische Strukturarbeit.

Zunehmende Komplexität – indiziert als Neuheitswert, als Grad der Abweichung von der Erwartung – der Struktur bewirkt steigende Erregung,

die von Langeweile bis zur Überforderung führt. Ästhetisches Wohlgefallen steht über diese Erregung und entsprechende Hemmprozesse in umgekehrt u-förmiger Beziehung zur Komplexität.

Das Erwartete ist das internalisiert Regelhafte. Gerade die Abweichung vom Regelhaften ist es, die nicht nur psychologische Bedeutsamkeit hat, sondern auch allgemein den ästhetischen Wert einer künstlerischen Arbeit bestimmt.

Es ist das unterschiedliche Ziel von Sprache und Musik als Informationsmedium bzw. Ausdrucksmittel, das bei vagen Parallelen auch auf der Ebene der Syntax wesentliche Unterschiede markiert. Dieses unterschiedliche Ziel wird auf der Ebene der Semantik letztlich deutlich.

In Anlehnung an semiotische (Sprach) Theorien unterscheidet L.B. MEYER (1956) in der Musik »designative meanings« und »embodied meanings«. Thematische Figuration ist willkürliche Zuweisung von Bedeutung zu einem Symbol; diese »designative meaning« kann ikonisch gestützt sein. Programmatische Musik baut auf ikonische Codes, die im Klanglichen das ausdrücken was sie bedeuten; Ikone markieren den Übergang von »designative meanings« zu »embodied meanings«.

Mit der Untersuchung von Konnotationen der Musik, ihren »embodied meanings«, verläßt man den Wirkungsbereich des Modells der Wortsprache. Konnotationen übertragen nicht Informationen, sie drücken unmittelbar aus.

Musik als Sprache der Emotion

Zusätzlich zu wortsprachlichen Ausdrucksmöglichkeiten von Gefühlen und der erregenden kompositorischen Strukturarbeit ist ein unmittelbarer Ausdruck von Emotion durch Klang, Rhythmus und Melodie als deren Konnotation zu beachten.

In G. KNEPLERs (1977) Vorstellung von der Genese der Musik aus einem ursprünglichen, vorsprachlichen Kommunikationssystem ist Musik die kulturelle Überformung jener klanglichen Laute, die eine Emotion begleiten. Sprache hat für den Ausdruck dieser Zustände Zeichen gewählt, sie kommuniziert sie mittelbar. Musik kann jene Bedeutungen als Mitbedeutungen unmittelbar ausdrücken und ist deswegen nicht nur im metaphorischen Sinn Sprache der Gefühle.

Emotionen sind der experimentellen empirischen Forschung prinzipiell nicht direkt zugänglich. Zwei methodische Zugänge erlauben sie indirekt zu beobachten.

Physiologische Erregung als Korrelat von Gefühlszuständen ist ein Indikator, der mit hoher Reliabilität die Intensität von Gefühlen anzeigt und leicht zugänglich ist. Als zirkuläre Phänomene dürften diese Maße körperliche Aktivierung durch zeitliche Gliederung gut abbilden. Methodisch schwierig hingegen ist die Isolation der Bestimmungsgrößen auf der Seite der Musik.

Die beobachtete Steigerung der Respirationsfrequenz (D. ELLIS & G. BRIGHOUSE 1954) bzw. der Puls- und zugleich Atemfrequenz (G. HARRER 1975) geht beim Hören komponierter Musik mit Temposteigerung und damit stets mit der allgemeinen Zunahme dynamisch-klanglicher Elemente einher. Dieses Konglomerat wird bei der Verwendung von an- und abschwellenden Trommelwirbeln als Stimuli reduziert, bei schneller werdenden Klicks völlig eliminiert, ihr möglicherweise erregender außermusikalischer Bezug ausgeschaltet. In Analogie zur synchronen Aktivitätssteigerung durch Lichtblitze nennt man die Wirkung von Tempo bzw. seiner Veränderung auf die physiologische Erregung »acoustic driving«. Funktionale wie techno-music ist Komposition von driving effects und kommuniziert durch Ausdruck Erregung, was zur Mitbewegung, zum Mitbewegtsein führt.

Die inhaltliche Komponente von Gefühlen wird mit dem semantischen Differential gemessen. L. E. OSGOOD et. al. (1957) entwickelten diese Methode aus der freien Assoziation und leisteten damit die Objektivierung und Standardisierung subjektiver, nicht bewußter Konnotationen. Adaptionen dieses Meßinstruments zur Bestimmung von Gefühlen kommuniziert durch Musik wurden im Umfeld der experimentellen Ästhetik von J. B. CROZIER (1974) vorgenommen.

Faktorenanalytische Studien erbringen, daß Gefühle unabhängig auf den Dimensionen evolution und activity laden. Diese Angenehmheitsempfindungen und Erregungen stehen in der Musik allgemein Strukturempfindungen bei. (vgl. W. JAUKE 1982)

Sowohl die Indizierung über physiologische Erscheinungen als auch die verbale Bekundung von Gefühlen bringen eindeutige Ergebnisse. Vorrangig rhythmisch dynamische Parameter der Musik sind mit activity assoziiert.

Abseits der zeichenhaften Darstellung von Gefühlen, ihrer ikonischen Abbildung und der unmittelbar von der Strukturempfindung hervorgerufenen emotionalen Empfindungen sind gefühlsmäßige Assoziationen beobachtbar, die möglicherweise Reste jener lautlichen Äußerungen sind, die einen gefühlsmäßigen Zustand begleiten und ein vorsprachliches Kommunikationssystem repräsentieren, von dem heraus sich Musik entwickelt haben könnte.

Nur vom Blickpunkt der Wortsprache und dem absoluten Denken des finished work aus betrachtet ist die Bemerkung Musik als Sprache der Gefühle sei metaphorisch und Sache der Dichtkunst und nicht der Wissenschaft (J. SLOBODA 1985) verständlich.

Die Vorstellung absoluter Musik hat die Idee des Werks geprägt; seine Einmaligkeit und schriftliche Fixierung haben zur Anwendung des Modells der Wortsprache zur Erklärung des kommunikativen Charakters von Musik verführt. Für die Übermittlung von Konnotation/Gefühlen erweist sich die Wortsprache als unzureichend; nonverbale Kommunikationsformen stellen dafür direktere Bedeutungsvermittler dar. Musik ist allgemein ein parawortsprachliches Ausdrucksmedium, das unmittelbar kommuniziert. Musikalisches Sprechen ist eine Vorstellung, die diesem Charakter entgegen kommt, die nonverbale Kommunikation dürfte als basale und ursprüngliche Kommunikationsform diese Art des unmittelbaren Sprechens modellhaft abbilden. Die Anwendung des Modells der nonverbalen Kommunikation auf Musik mag dem parawortsprachlichen Ausdruckscharakter von Musik adäquat sein.

Mit der Verschiebung des Fokus von der Sprache des Werkes zum Sprechen des Musizierens wird die Diskussion des kommunikativen Charakters der Musik aus der ideologisierenden Dichotomie von absolutem Verständnis von Musik und der Anwendung des Modells der Wortsprache auf sie und ihrem funktionalen Verständnis in der Nähe der Sprache der Gefühle herausgeführt.

Musizieren als nonverbale Kommunikation

Interaktion als gestaltendes Verhalten nonverbaler Kommunikation

Das Verständnis von informellem Musizieren als nonverbale Kommunikation und die Gestaltung aus ihr heraus durch Interaktionen eröffnet den alternativen Blick auf Musik als ein in sich kommunikatives System und damit auf ihr Werden wie ihre Einbindung in die Neuen Künste.

Die Beobachtung informeller Kommunikation legt nicht nur Regeln der Kommunikation dar, sondern auch ihr Werden und jene damit einhergehenden Gestaltungsprozesse.

Die Gruppenpsychologie wertet Kommunikationsvorgänge als Interaktionen und erachtet sie als Gestaltungsmechanismen einer Gruppe (R. F. BALES 1950). Interaktionen sind dabei Handlungen, die nicht bloß Informationen von einem Sender zu einem Empfänger verständlich übermitteln, sondern die bei den kommunizierenden Agenten etwas verändern.

Dieser Interaktionsbegriff geht einher mit jenem der interaktiven Künste, wenn man diesen von seiner kinetischen Vergangenheit (F. POPPER 1991) und somit mechanistischen Bestimmung sowie von seiner technologischen als man-machine-interface (R. ROWE 1993) löst und seine politisch-ideologische Motivation zusätzlich sieht. Interaktion ist von Reaktion als die Auslösung determinierten Verhaltens wie von Partizipation zu unterscheiden, die die Teilhabe am »künstlerischen« Ereignis als soziales Ereignis meint und sich pointiert im Happening-Konzert von einer im Verein mit dem Werk entstandenen passiven bürgerlichen Kunstrezeptionsform abhebt (vgl. W. JAUKE 1995). Interaktion ist Gestaltungsgröße in einem Kommunikationssystem.

Die freie kollektive Musizierform des Free-Jazz, die Avantgarde der wirbestimmten 60er Jahre, nutzt diese informelle Kommunikationsform zur musikalischen Gestaltung; sie ist >Komponieren< aus der »musikalischen Interaktion« (W. KNAUER 1996 Sp. 1410).

Abseits zuvor festgelegter Regeln führt die Beobachtung des klanglichen und verhaltensmäßigen Status Quo in einer frei musizierenden Gruppe und die stete Interpretation dieses Geschehens am Hintergrund persönlicher Erfahrung das musikalische Gesamtgeschehen weiter. Die subjektive Interpretation des Beobachteten dient dabei als Basis neuerlicher Eingaben in das musizierende Kommunikations-System, zugleich modifiziert die Beobachtung das Reservoir an Erfahrungen. Das kognitionstheoretische Dreispeichermodell der Informationsverarbeitung (U. NEISSER 1967) liegt dieser Kommunikation zugrunde. Kommunikationsinhalt und Kommunikationsstruktur stehen über Interaktion in einem reflexiven Bezug.

Das kommunizierende Musizieren der Spieler führt zur informellen Herausbildung einer musikalischen Gruppenstruktur, wobei jeder Spieler ein Kommunikations-Node, entpersonifiziert ein als »Stimme« in einem kompositorischen Prozess bezeichnbarer Repräsentant wird.

Die Interaktionsanalyse legt diese informell entstandene Kommunikationsstruktur frei, wo hingegen die Werkanalyse die zuvor angewandten Regeln bzw. spannungsreichen Abweichungen davon freilegt.

Eine Formalisierung des Gestaltungsprozesses durch musikalische Kommunikation geschieht in der »Gruppe 01« (<http://gewi.kfunigraz.ac.at/grelle.musik/gruppe01/gruppe01.html>). Die kollektive freie Improvisation der Free Jazz Gruppe ist dabei Modell der informellen Gestaltung wie Ausgangspunkt der Simulation. Ein Computersystem beobachtet und übernimmt allmählich die Kommunikationsstrukturen frei improvisierender Akteure und formalisiert somit den von ihnen vollzogenen Gestaltungsprozess.

Einheiten der Beobachtung sind entsprechend dem verhaltensbasierten Modell von Musizieren nicht nur die hervorgebrachten musikalischen Strukturen, sondern die Art des Spielens als ein Maß des musikalischen Ausdrucks; der mit dem Spannungs-Lösungs-Prinzip einhergehende Indikator dafür ist die körperliche Bewegung.

Score-Follower beobachten die musikalische Hervorbringung, Bewegungsdetektoren die musikantische Aktion. Die Informationen über Struktur und Aktion werden gewichtet zueinandergestellt. Häufig Beobachtetes wird als bedeutsam erachtet und in einen Speicher geschrieben, neu einlangende Information wird im Arbeitsspeicher stets mit abgelagerten Informationen verglichen und interpretiert. Erkennens-/Vergleichsprozesse basieren auf hierarchischen Mustererkennungsprozessen. Die aktuellen Informationen verändern permanent auch die Basis ihrer Interpretation: die in einer Art Langzeitspeicher abgelagerten Informationen, die als ständig sich änderndes Regelsystem zur Genese von Neuem verwendet werden.

Neuere Generationen von Systemen lösen ältere in einem Evolutionsprozess des Erfahrungswissens ab und generieren Musik als Prozeß.

Schluß

Die Anwendung des Modells der Wortsprache auf Musik mag aus der Orientierung am schriftlich fixierten Werk geleitet gewesen sein, Musik als die Sprache der Gefühle begriffen, führt bereits zu jenen originären par- oder vorsprachlichen Ausdrucksformen, die Musik als Kommunikationssystem erachten, das allumfassend in einem Modell der nonverbalen Kommunikation beschreibbar ist. Dieser Zugang hat Erklärungswert abseits jenes schmalen Ausschnittes der europäischen Kunstmusik und bietet zugleich auch Grundlage für eine die technologiegeprägten Kunstformen unserer Zeit integrierende Sicht. Es sind dies Kunstformen die wesentlich von einem Verständnis von Musik aus betrieben in der Musik aber nur unzureichend rezipiert und der Domäne der bildenden Kunst überlassen wurden, die mit einer an das Verhalten von Gegenständen gebundenen mechanistischen Sicht operiert und deswegen zu deren Bestimmung eines Paradigmenwechsels bedarf.

Sprache als Kommunikationsmittel ermöglicht eindeutige Informationsübertragung, Musik kommuniziert direkt Konnotationen ihres Mediums Struktur. Das Paradigma von Spannung – Lösung ist ihre Triebfeder, Zeitgestalt, kompositorische Verarbeitung sind erregendes Spiel mit strukturellen Erwartungen und dem Neuheitswert von Information. Ästhetisches

Wohlgefallen ist dann jene angenehm erlebte Spannungserhöhung, die durch eine leichte Irritation des Gewohnten, durch die mäßige Störung der subjektiven Vorhersagbarkeit des strukturellen Ablaufs syntaktischer Elemente, eintritt. Der SCHENKERSche Ursatz wie die experimentelle Ästhetik BERLYNEs basieren auf der Aktivierungstheorie W. WUNDTs; Musikstruktur wie ihre unmittelbare Kommunikation von Emotion werden dadurch erklärt.

Interaktion ist Verhalten, das durch wechselseitigen Informationsaustausch zur laufenden Modifikation von Information und deren Träger führt. Damit wirkt Interaktion gestaltend im reflexiven Gefüge von Inhalt und Struktur der Kommunikation. Interaktion als Akt der nonverbalen Kommunikation ist somit ein grundlegendes Kommunikations- und zugleich Gestaltungsmittel, das selbstorganisierend gestaltet ohne das willkürliche Setzen von Regeln der Gestaltung. Regeln sind letztendlich Ausdruck von Wertigkeit; Wertigkeiten von innen entstanden, sind jenen von außen vorzuziehen.

Als Teil einer gesellschaftlichen Entwicklung hat der Free Jazz diese Strukturierung erprobt, haben die interaktiven Künste sie formalisiert und in technoiden Formen verfügbar gemacht, bringt Net-Art dieses Paradigma wie Abbild informeller sozialer Strukturbildung adäquaterweise mit dem unstrukturierten Netz des World-Wide-Web zusammen und schafft breites Bewußtsein für informelle Demokratisierung.

Den kommunikativen Charakter von Musik nicht von der Vorstellung der Musik als Sprache aber des Musizierens als nonverbales Sprechen prüfend zu betrachten kann neue Akzente selbst in der Diskussion um die Genese von Mehrstimmigkeit auch im außereuropäischen Sinn setzen, Gestaltung findet in der musikalischen Gestalt seine Manifestation. Dies führt zurück – nach einem Verständnis von Kunst als Gesetztes und Vollenendetes im Werk – zu Kunst als Prozeß, sie bringt Musik als die Kommunikationskunst ins Zentrum der Erklärungsansätze Neuer Künste.

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Borut Loparnik
Die Kommunikation im Schatten der Unersichtlichkeit
Eine Frage des Expressionismus

Eines der künstlerischen Kriterien für das Verstehen der Musik als Sprache ist die semantische Ebene der klanglichen Vorstellung. Da ihre metaphorische Textur nur in den psychologisch sensitiven Dimensionen des menschlichen Fassungsvermögens ablesbar ist, stellt der Bereich der intendierten als auch der unvorhersehbaren Bedeutungen des symbolischen musikalischen Inhalts den einzigen maßgebenden Raum der kommunikativen Präsenz und Reichweite dar. Exemplum docet, daß unter der Oberfläche der Geschichtsschreibung zahlreiche palimpsestartige Spuren vorliegen, die auf diesen Einfluß hinweisen. Mehr noch, sie weisen auf die Prädominanz der semantischen Ersichtlichkeit bezüglich der Genese der schöpferischen Intentionen hin, obwohl diese in der esoterischen Geborgenheit der *musicae reservatae* ruhen. Diese Erscheinung ist nicht digressiv und bekundet die Art der Autor-Zuhörer-Relation. Sie umreißt insbesondere den Rahmen ihrer möglichen Identifikation mit dem Werk, oder, um es zu vereinfachen, die Grenze des ästhetisch Annehmbaren. Jede Abweichung über diesen Rahmen hinaus ist ein Risiko für die optimale Kommunikation.

Es ist also kein Zufall, daß der Gegenstand der Geschichte auch die Rolle betrifft, – obwohl diese bislang soziologisch und ästhetisch keinen wesentlichen Teil spielte – die die Reaktion auf die Semantik im Laufe der sog. Musikentwicklung spielt.¹ Dem Anschein nach paradox ist dabei nur der Umstand, daß die musikalische Bedeutung bzw. das hermeneutisch tiefere Verhältnis zum Inhalt für die Rezeption der klanglichen Ausdrucksweise in concreto evident als ein sekundäres und unklares Kriterium anzusehen ist. Das künstlerische Fazit, an dem die zeitliche Distanz und aposteriorische Erklärungen noch keinen Anteil haben, zeigt sich als eine unklare, unbewußte Form der psychischen Genugtuung oder Störung, die jedoch in die Domäne des Geschmacks gehören. Die Reaktion auf die Intentionen des Komponisten ist daher nicht das analytische Urteil, sondern die Feststellung des Erfolgs bzw. des Mißerfolgs, des »Guten« bzw. des »Schlechten«. Diese beiden Kategorien sind weder ästhetisch noch hermeneutisch, und sind

¹ Über das jetzige Verständnis des Begriffs Entwicklung siehe: Was heißt Fortschritt?, Musik-Konzepte Nr. 100, München 1998.

auch nicht poetologisch gemeint. Sie bestimmen lediglich den Charakter und die Ebene der Interaktion, die das Kunstwerk erreicht hat.

Das durchschnittliche Rezeptionsinstrumentarium (und darum geht es in *concreto*, bevor das Geschehen in die historische Observation und der Inhalt in axiologische Parameter übersetzt werden), bleibt immer nur die Funktion der semantisch unklaren Wahrnehmung. Was es schafft, ist nur eine Annäherung – zum einen an den Kern des parabelförmig ausgedrückten Eindrucks, zum anderen an die metaphorische Textur der Musik, oder zumindest der Sprache, in der diese zugänglich ist. Die Indirektheit dieses Verhältnisses wird sehr treffend durch das gängige, in der Umgangssprache gebräuchliche Syntagma »die Musik verstehen« definiert. Demnach wird die Musik als ein Kommunikationsmittel aufgefaßt, also als Klangsprache, wobei ihre Beherrschung, alias die Ersichtlichkeit des erfassten Inhalts, die Bedingung für die kommunikative Präsenz des Werkes darstellt.

Mit anderen Worten – die Rezeption in *concreto* ist die instinktive Suche nach dem Verstehen und den Möglichkeiten für eine assoziative Identifikation mit dem Kunstwerk mittels Sprache. Das bedeutet, daß sie von der musikalischen Poetik geleitet wird, ihrer Lexik und Struktur, und noch mehr von ihrer Syntax und Morphologie: von der individuellen Poetik als Totalität der kompositorischen Mutationen des Allgemeinen. Da sie am evidentesten durch Sprache oder Aussprache kategorisiert wird, entscheidet in erster Linie die »Orthophonie«, wie und wie viel der *sensus communis* wahrnehmen wird, daß die Sprache die semantische Substanz des Werkes widerspiegelt.

Ob er sie (approximativ) auch begreifen wird, ist zwar eine aposteriorische, jedoch zugleich eine neue Frage, die in die anthropologischen Schichten des Phänomens Sprache hineinreicht. Sein Ausgangspunkt sind die grundlegenden Züge des Musikdenkens, mit denen die Ästhetik den Stil definiert und die Musikgeschichte die Perioden zwischen einzelnen tektonischen Verschiebungen der poetologischen Konstanten klassifiziert. In diesen verhältnismäßig langen zeitlichen Segmenten paßt sich nämlich das Rezeptionsinstrumentarium allmählich die zentralen Eigenschaften des Denkens bis zu Stereotypen an, die das triviale Kodesystem der Bedeutungswerte aufrechterhalten. Dieser Prozeß ist zweifelsohne eine instinktive Korrektur hoher ästhetischer Maßstäbe, doch hat das Resultat eine tiefere Konnotation. Das jeweilige Abweichung von artistischen Ansprüchen stellt die im Grunde unberührte, ahistorische, gegen die inhaltlichen Metamorphosen resistente Verflechtung eindimensionaler psychologisch-phänomenologischen Konvergenzen wieder her, die die Natur des »herkömmlichen Geschmacks« sind und außerhalb des Geschehens gelten, auf das sich die

Geschichte stützt. Daß es sich um ein geistig rudimentäres System handelt, läßt sich am besten an den Modalitäten der U-Musik ablesen, in der permanente Innovationen im Bereich des Scheins nie den Inhalt erreichen. Das, was die Ablehnung des Kunstwerkes auslöst, ist demnach nicht eine ungewöhnliche Lexik oder eine schlechtere Ersichtlichkeit der Bedeutungen in einer individuell profilierten Sprache. Der ausschlaggebende Impuls ist die instinktive Wahrnehmung dessen, daß die Musik anerkannte Werte reinterpretiert, sie möglicherweise zerstört oder sogar ihren Sinn negiert. Anders ausgedrückt, das Kodesystem, das sich auf das Unbewußte stützt, ist das Maß für die assoziative semantische Identifikation, und damit das Maß für das ästhetisch Akzeptable, das den Wechsel und die Exzesse in der »Orthophonie« erklärt.

Die Musikwissenschaft, vornehmlich die Musikgeschichte, stößt angesichts des Unbewußten, insbesondere wenn dieses latent existiert, also ohne den artikulierten Hintergrund, auf bestimmte Schwierigkeiten. Da es einer methodologischen Analyse nicht zugänglich ist, dienen seine Rolle und seine Reichweite lediglich der Illustration des sprachlichen, höchstens stilistischen Unverständnisses, also der Gegensätze oder Unterschiede zwischen dem Autor und dem Publikum. Die Logik des Andersartigen wird in Anbetracht des real Beweisbaren in den Bereich der selbstverständlichen Regressionen verdrängt, die zumeist durch die Auffassung der sog. Entwicklung bzw. des Fortschrittes evoziert werden. Daß sie trotzdem aus dem Hintergrund des Geschehens reflektiert, ist also nicht das Verdienst der heutigen Theorie, sondern der Praxis, die der enigmatischen Idiomatik des Unbewußten volle Geltung verschafft. In der Rezeption, obwohl sie *res secreta* zu sein scheint, in der Interpretation, für die sie das existenzielle Medium darstellt, und im Schaffensprozeß, dem sie *punctum saliens* ist.

Die Musikgeschichte bringt diese indikatorischen Erscheinungen also selten und nur durch Hypothesen zur Sprache – hört aber auch schnell auf, sich damit zu befassen, wenn das Unbewußte zum entscheidenden Agens auf beiden Seiten des Kommunikationsverhältnisses wird, d.h. beim Komponisten und bei den Zuhörern. In einer solchen Dichotomie werden Ursachen und Wirkungen nicht nur durch verschiedene Ebenen der Wahrnehmung und Reaktionen verwickelt, sondern auch durch die Kontrastmodi, in denen sich Ursachen und Wirkungen beider Entitäten manifestieren bzw. aufeinanderprallen. Dieser Antagonismus ist nicht aufzulösen, da er von der Unvereinbarkeit der psychologischen Prädestination beherrscht wird, gültig in concreto als auch danach. Das belegt im 20. Jahrhundert das Schicksal des Expressionismus vielleicht noch mehr als frühere Abschnitte der Musikgeschichte.

Aus der Distanz des kompositorischen Repertoriums der Nachfolger ist seine stilistische Gestalt selbstverständlich der natürliche Gipfel des romantischen Modernismus. Die Ansätze avantgardistischer Elemente, die später von Revolutionären und Revisionisten entwickelt werden, sind somit nach historischen Maßstäben die Fortsetzung und nicht der Bruch, d.h., sie sind die extreme morphologisch-syntaktische Mutation des Erbes und nicht – um es abstrakter auszudrücken – die Aufhebung des Essentiellen. Solche Momente bezeichnet die Geschichte als Übergänge, die Musikwissenschaft hat sie auch kritische Jahre genannt.² Beide sehen das zentrale Problem dieses chaotischen Geschehens einstimmig in der plötzlichen und radikalen Destruktion der Sprache bzw. der Grundsätze, die sie konstituieren. Die Folgen dessen nimmt die Öffentlichkeit vornehmlich als irritierendes Entstellen des Materials auf, eventuell als ästhetisch subversive Axiologie und gewiß als die terminologische Verwirrung, die zwischen den Autoren und Referenten herrscht.³ Von der Ebene ihrer Betrachtung her müssen wir ihr zustimmen, daß die Übergänge immer das Sterben des Existierenden darstellen. Doch ist der Blick auf der Ebene, die abgelehnt wird, d.h. in den Augen des Komponisten, umgekehrt. Da geht es nämlich um die Fortsetzung und Verteidigung, genauer gesagt, um die Wiederaufnahme und Erneuerung der banalisierten und deformierten Postulate der ausgehenden Epoche.

Die Expressionisten negieren keineswegs die innere Freiheit, im Gegenteil, sie potenzieren die Realität des geistig Autonomen, Unbewußten und Arationalen, was dem einsamen romantischen Subjekt die Distanz zur Welt gewährt. Mit dem Neuen in der Sprache versuchen sie den Inhalt und die semantische Substanz seiner Herkunft zu retten, was besagt, daß die Veränderungen die Reinterpretation und nicht die Elimination des Vererbten betreffen. Wie immer sie schon entstehen mögen und wie weit sie auch von den Determinanten des 19. Jahrhunderts entfernt zu sein scheinen, ihre Anlehnung an die Tradition ist der einzige, obwohl häufig schwer nachzuweisende Zug, der den Expressionismus von der sog. historischen Avantgarde unterscheidet – und selbstverständlich von der Romantik.⁴

² Vgl. Report of the Tenth Congress [of] International Musicological Society Ljubljana 1967 (ed. by D. Cvetko), Kassel [etc.], Ljubljana 1970, besonders S. 216-247 (Critical Years in European Musical History 1915-1925).

³ Für den Gebrauch des Begriffs Expressionismus siehe: Troschke, M. v., Expressionismus, in: Handwörterbuch der musikalischen Terminologie (1988).

⁴ Vgl. Stephan, R., Expressionismus, in: MGG (2., neubearb. Ausg.), Sachteil 3, Kassel [etc.] 1995, Sp. 244-253; Mauser, S., Das expressionistische Musiktheater der Wiener Schule, Schriften der Hochschule für Musik München, Bd. 3, München 1982, S. 1-9.

Leider scheint das Letztere ein mehr oder minder marginales Phänomen zu sein, das auch von der Musikgeschichte als unbrauchbares Kriterium angesehen wird. Der Blick auf das Geschehen, der im ästhetischen Sinne die fragliche Progression klassifiziert und relativiert, vernachlässigt nämlich die Tatsache, daß die Expressionisten vor allem durch ihr kritisches und nicht durch ein sinkretisches Verhältnis zur ästhetischen Lage, in der ihre Intentionen exkommuniziert werden, mit der Tradition verbunden sind. Das, wonach sie streben, läßt sich nicht im Bereich der abstrakten stilistischen Metaphysik verwirklichen, sondern auf dem realen Boden des Milieus, das sie gezeichnet hat und dem sie angehören. Allen gemeinsam ist die Negation der regionalen künstlerischen Situation, ihrer Mentalität und eine radikale Ablehnung adaptierter Werte, einer verknöcherten Sprache und semantischer Stereotypen, mit denen ihr geografischer Raum lebt. Sie berufen sich nicht auf gemeinsame stilistische Tendenzen, suchen keine Korrelate bei verwandten Rebellen anderwärts und verkünden nicht ihre Grundsätze in Manifesten, die zu ihrer Zeit und auch später Europa überfluteten. Ihr Ausgangspunkt und Arbeitsraum ist die *domus sua propria*.

Eine solche Haltung hebt mindestens dreierlei hervor. Zweifellos nationale, des öfteren nationalistische Vorurteile und Gegensätze, die den Expressionismus begleiteten und einschränkten.⁵ Nicht minder die psychologische Nähe und das ästhetische Bewußtsein, infolgedessen sich die expressionistischen Einzelgänger als geistige Nachfolger »ihrer« spätromantischen Modernisten fühlten; so war der Kreis um Schönberg z.B. an Mahler gebunden, die russischen Symbolisten an Skrjabin.⁶ Am stärksten aber betonen die angeführten Züge eine Eigenschaft, die für das Verständnis dieses Geschehens als wesentlich und für die historische Interpretation als entscheidend zu betrachten ist: trotz der einheitlichen Idee war der Expressionis-

⁵ Schönberg im Brief an Alma Mahler, 28. 8. 1914: »... ich konnte *nie* etwas anfangen mit *aller* ausländischen Musik. Mir kam sie immer schal, leer, widerlich, süßlich, verlogen und ungekonnt vor.« – Zit. nach: Nono-Schönberg, N. (Hrsg.), Arnold Schönberg 1874-1951. Lebensgeschichte in Begegnungen, Klagenfurt und Wien 1998, S. 133.

⁶ Vgl. z.B. Nono-Schönberg, N. (Hrsg.), o.c., S. 50-53, 80-81, 101; Reich, W., Arnold Schönberg oder Der konservative Revolutionär, Wien [etc.] 1974, S. 52-56; Lea, H. A., Gustav Mahler und der Expressionismus, in: Aspekte des Expressionismus. Periodisierung, Stil, Gedanke, Heidelberg 1968, S. 85-102; Sabanejev, L., Prometheus von Skrjabin, in: Der Blaue Reiter (dokumentarische Neuausg. von K. Lankheit), München 1990, S. 107-124; Goldstein, M., Skrjabin und die Skrjabinisten, in: Aleksandr Skrjabin und die Skrjabinisten (1), Musik-Konzepte Nr. 32-33. München 1983, S. 178-190; Левая, Т., Русская музыка начала XX века в художественном контексте эпохи / Russische Musik am Anfang des XX. Jahrhundert im künstlerischen Kontext der Epoche, Москва 1991.

mus – insbesondere in bezug auf die Sprache – eine extrem variable Antwort auf unterschiedliche oder sogar ganz unvergleichbare Umstände.

Mit ihm kam zum ersten Mal eine der zentralsten Modalitäten der zersplitterten künstlerischen Welt des 20. Jahrhunderts zum Vorschein: die Dispersität. Unbeständig, wie jeder historische oder persönliche Übergang, entfaltete sich der Expressionismus nicht zu einem definierbaren Stil, er blieb eine Bewegung – jedoch auch als solcher ein Wegweiser zur Unruhe der neuen Epoche. Unter dem Aspekt aller seiner Erscheinungsformen betrachtet, läßt sich behaupten, daß es sich um Expressionismen handelte, und nicht um den Expressionismus. Das bedeutet folglich, daß das Charakteristikum Schönbergs, bzw. sein Einfluß auf den deutschsprachigen Raum, nicht der einzige Agens oder sogar das Muster der meisten Handlungen war, obwohl die heutige Musikwissenschaft dazu neigt, beides als Maßstab der Metamorphosen, zumindest im geistigen Kontext eines imaginären Mitteleuropas, zu betrachten. Das bedeutet weiterhin auch, daß das Nationale – einschließlich folkloristischer Idiome – der grundlegende Impuls der expressionistischen Erneuerung überall dort war, wo der kulturimperialistische Druck besonders stark verspürt wurde. Und nicht zuletzt läßt sich behaupten, daß laut der Adornschen politisch-ideologischen Terminologie sich die »agraren«, alias nicht-historischen Länder, gerade durch dem Expressionismus einen Teil ihrer eigenen künstlerischen Identität erkämpfen konnten.

Die Perspektive der historischen Verdienste trug jedoch kaum zu einem besseren Verhältnis zwischen dem Publikum und den Schaffenden bei. Es war die Originalität dieser Bewegung, die dieses Verhältnis verwickelte und vereitelte, denn man wollte laut Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht »eine neue Wahrheit und Freiheit gewinnen aus den Kräften des Unbewußten, schöpferisch Triebhaften, Intuitiven.«⁷ Mit einem potenzierten Ego im Mittelpunkt und der Betonung des Unbewußten in seiner Erlebniswelt rief man eine kommunikative Blockade hervor. Nicht nur, daß die Lexik »abstoßend« wirkte, auch die Syntax und die Morphologie waren nicht klar artikuliert, nicht »orthophonisch« und daher unersichtlich.⁸ Daß sie Möglichkeiten einer semantischen Perzeption in sich bergen, zeigte sich, wie immer, erst später, jedoch mit überdurchschnittlich starker Distinktion des noch Akzeptablen, was bis heute so geblieben ist.

⁷ Das grundsätzlich Neue der Neuen Musik, in: Eggebrecht, H. H., Musik in Abendland. Prozesse und Stationen von Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart, München, Zürich 1991, S. 759.

⁸ Schultz, W.-A., Die freien Formen in der Musik des Expressionismus und Impressionismus, Hamburger Beiträge zur Musikwissenschaft, Bd. 14, Hamburg 1974, S. 93-140.

Mit anderen Worten, das System der vereinfachten Werte fand keine gemeinsamen Anhaltspunkte, an denen sich die expressionistische Poetik und ihr Inhalt adaptieren ließen. Es half nicht, daß beide eigentlich nur auf zwei verschiedene Arten die geistige und seelische Substanz des späten 19. Jahrhunderts beleuchteten. Auch die folkloristische Idiomatik brachte in der Regel kaum etwas. Beides weist darauf hin, daß die Wurzeln dieses Gegensatzes vermutlich ins rein Triebhafte hineinreichten. Dorthin, wo sich die Funktionen des Individuellen und des Massenhaften auf den ursprünglichen Widerspruch zwischen dem Subjekt und der Umgebung reduzieren lassen, was im Hinblick auf unsere Fragestellung den Status des Unbewußten definiert. Das Unbewußte sublimiert sich beim Schaffenden instinktiv im intellektuell kontrollierten Ausdruck inhaltlich neuer Symbole, beim Publikum hingegen ist es auf die instinktive Suche nach der sensitiven Identifikation mit dem inhaltlich Bekannten ausgerichtet. Diese beiden Prozesse können nur dann mehr oder weniger übereinstimmen, wenn die Codes der metaphorischen Textur und des rezeptiven Instrumentariums gegenseitig übersetzbar sind. Zumindest auf der ersten der drei Stufen der ästhetischen Kommunikation, bei ersichtlicher Sprache, wenn schon nicht in der Zugänglichkeit der semantischen Wahrnehmung und des inhaltlich Annehmbaren.

Doch hier rückten die Expressionisten zu sehr in die Unendlichkeit der visionären Intime des Unbewußten, als daß ihnen die Umgebung hätte folgen können. Und zu weit in die Freiheit des sprachlichen Prunks, als daß sie ihn hätten beherrschen können. Es wurde zu einer verhexten Falle, aus der nur der Meister der Einschränkung – das System – herauszuhelfen vermochte. Fast alle suchten nach ihm, intuitiv oder intellektuell, systematisch oder unsicher, nach metaphysischen Mustern oder nach der musikalischen Transmutation, doch nur wenige erreichten das Ziel. Schönberg, an den wir uns beziehen, da er es schaffte, sein System durchzusetzen, ist demnach historischer *pars pro toto* für den Strom, von dem er weder die Quelle noch die Mündung war. In diesem Strom fanden sich (und ertranken größtenteils) viele, von Hauer, Ėiurlionis oder Obuhov bis zu Kogoj und Slavenski.⁹

⁹ Vgl. z.B. Kalisch, V., Der unbekannte Bekannte. Der Komponist Josef Mathias Hauer, *NZfM* 149/1988, 3, S. 10-16; Crepaz, G., Josef Mathias Hauers op. 1: Nomos, Melos 1988, 4, S. 20-44; Wehmeyer, G., Thema und sechs Variationen oder Variationen über das Thema »Sefaa Esec« für Klavier, op. 15 (1904) von Mikolajus Konstantinas Ėiurlionis, Melos 1985, 1, S. 2-17; Lesle, L., Meeressonate und Tannenbaumfuge. Der litauische Maler-Musiker Mikolajus Konstantinas Ėiurlionis, *NZfM* 154/1993, 6, S. 24-29; Eberle, G., Klangkomplex, Trope, Reihe, *Musica* 34/1980, 2, S. 139-144; Schloezer, B. de, Nikolaj Obuhov, in: Aleksandr Skrjabin und die Skrjabinisten 2, *Musik-Konzepte* Nr. 37-38, München 1984, S. 107-121; Peričić, V., Josip Slavenski und seine Astroakustik, *Musiktheorie* 3/1988, 1, S. 55-69.

Sie zeugen noch für eine der expressionistischen Voraussagen des 20. Jahrhunderts, nämlich für seinen Überfluss an Systemen und die Tyrannei des Systemhaften. Und sie waren Akteure in der letzten Szene der expressionistischen Parabel historischer Übergänge, als das Denken aus dem Unbewußten heraus nicht mehr in der Lage war, die regelgeleitete Destination oder zumindest einen eingeschränkten sprachlichen Raum einzuhalten. Als Erneuerung des Gegebenen durch Verfall unterlag es der Konsolidation des Neuen durch Bauen oder mußte sich zurückziehen. Das Fazit war dasselbe: die triebhafte Spannung verlor an Intensität und die semantische Metaphorik verlor ihre Richtung. Was entstanden war, hatte eine andere Substanz und andere kommunikative Absichten, es sprach eine neue Sprache.

Das bedeutet nicht, daß damit auch das historische Paradigma, besser gesagt, das Paradigma des intuitiv geformten Klanges, erloschen ist. Sollte es sich um Gesualdo oder Wolfgang Rihm handeln, es existiert immer im letzten Schritt zu dem äußersten Rand oder jenseits des Systems, wo sich das Weite der freien Auswahl öffnet. Und dort entscheidet das Unbewußte.¹⁰

(Übersetzung Vanda Richter)

¹⁰ Danuser, H., Inspiration, Rationalität, Zufall. Über musikalische Poetik im 20. Jahrhundert, AfMw 47/1990, 2, S. 95.



ISSN 0353-4510



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