HENRYK ELZENBERG AS A FORERUNNER OF ANGLO-AMERICAN CONCEPTS OF EXPRESSION

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Classic expression theory identified the emotional content of works of art with the feelings of the artists and the recipients. This content thus appeared to be external to the work itself. Consequently, formalism declared it to be irrelevant to a work's value. A way out of this predicament – one which the Polish aesthetician Henryk Elzenberg (1887–1967) was among the first to propose – was suggested by the idea that physical, sensory objects can themselves possess emotional qualities. Thanks to Bouwsma and Beardsley, this concept – of expressiveness as a quality – became common in Anglo-American aesthetics from the 1950s onwards. At the same time, these authors demanded that the term 'expression' be expunged from the language of aesthetics. But the widespread tendency to conceptualize the emotional content of art in terms of the expression of a certain subject (most often the artist) still requires some explanation – interpretation, rather than negation. One interpretation construes the expressiveness of works of art in terms of the expression of a fictitious subject, the 'work's persona', conceived by Elzenberg in the 1950s and 1960s. This article discusses his concept and explains some of its more complex aspects, before addressing the emergence of a very similar concept within Anglo-American aesthetics. This concept was gradually elaborated in the 1970s and 1980s, but only in the 1990s did it become more fully developed and widely discussed.

I. INTRODUCTION

The nineteenth century made its mark on aesthetics by leaving it under the influence of the paradigm of expression. This paradigm was first made credible in artistic practice by Romanticism. Then, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it was given a theoretical formulation by figures such as Eugène Véron in France (*L'Esthétique*, 1878), Leo Tolstoy in Russia (*What Is Art?,* 1898), Benedetto Croce in Italy (*Estetica come scienza dell'espressione e linguistica generale*, 1902), Curt Ducasse in the USA (*The Philosophy of Art*, 1929), and R. G. Collingwood in the UK (*The Principles of Art*, 1938).[1] Despite all the differences between these systems, their common denominator seems relatively obvious: the fundamental content of a work of art is the creator's feeling, which is expressed in his or her work,

[1] These are cited as the Classics of expression theory, for example, by Alan Tormey in *The Concept of Expression* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971), 143–53, and Guy Sircello in *Mind and Art: An Essay on the Varieties of Expression* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972).

allowing the recipient to share it. Such an understanding of expressiveness in relation to art has unquestionable persuasive power: it makes art something greater than a superficial aesthetic pleasure, something with important, profound content, a medium of spiritual understanding between people.

In this vision, however, a work of art is merely a medium for transmitting feelings from the artist to the recipient, and in this instrumental role it may be perceived as secondary and replaceable: any other object or method providing the same transmission of feelings is equivalent to a work of art. This stands in contradiction to another very strong belief about art – namely, that each work of art is autonomous and has unique value.

In other words, classic expression theory reduces the content of art to things that are essentially external to it, to the experiences of the artists or the recipients or both. In an attempt to restore value to the work itself, formalism deemed external elements of this type to be irrelevant to the work's value. In this way, interpreting the emotional content of art as comprising the experiences of the artist or the recipient results in taking emotion out of art. This conclusion is difficult to accept, since the emotional content of art is universally perceived to be an integral part of it (and in certain forms of art, such as music or lyric poetry, crucial).

II. EMOTIONAL COLOURING ACCORDING TO HENRYK ELZENBERG…

A way out of this predicament was suggested by the idea that objects perceivable by the senses (let's call them 'sensory objects') can themselves have certain emotional qualities. The Polish aesthetician Henryk Elzenberg (1887–1967) was one of the first to propose this concept, in 1937, at a time when later versions of classic expression theory were being formulated in the English-language literature (for example, Curt Ducasse, 1929, and R. G. Collingwood, 1938).[2]

[2] On Elzenberg's general philosophical outlook and biographical data, see Leslaw Hostynski, 'The Axiological System of Henryk Elzenberg', in *Polish Axiology: The 20th Century and Beyond*, ed. Stanislaw Jedynak, Polish Philosophical Studies 5 (Washington, DC: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2005), 179–211, and Piotr Stankiewicz, 'Henryk Elzenberg and His Philosophical System', *International Journal of Arts and Sciences* 3 (2010): 55–70, http://openaccesslibrary.org/images/HAR192_Piotr_Stankiewicz.pdf. The following works of Elzenberg have appeared in foreign languages: his Sorbonne doctoral thesis published as Henri Elsenberg, *Sentiment religieux chez Leconte de Lisle* (Paris: Jouve, 1909); Henryk Elzenberg, 'Le phénomène ésthetique de la coloration affective', in *Actes du deuxième congrés international d'esthétique et de science de l'art*, vol. 1 (Paris: Alcan, 1937), 221–25; a selection from his manuscripts on value theory published as Henryk Elzenberg, 'Negative Values', ed. Ulryk Schrade and Boguslaw Wolniewicz, trans. Peter Geach and Boguslaw Wolniewicz, in *Logic and Ethics*, ed. Peter Geach, Nijhoff International Philosophy Series 41 (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1990), 21–31; and a German translation of a philosophical diary he kept from 1907 through 1963, *Kummer mit dem Sein: Tagebuch eines Philosophen* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2004), which appeared originally as *Kłopot z istnieniem: Aforyzmy w porządku czasu* [Trouble with existence: Aphorisms in the order of time] (Kraków: Znak, 1963).

In 'Emotional Colouring as an Aesthetic Phenomenon' (1937) Elzenberg drew attention to a way of understanding expressivity,[3] which is linked directly with the expressive object itself, for example, a work of art, and tends not to be overtly present in traditional theories of expression.[4] In order to explain and justify his conception, Elzenberg began by enumerating three phenomena that were traditionally encompassed by the notion of expressivity. The first of these is the expressing of real mental content by means of objects accessible to sensory cognition (for example, an artist's manifesting his or her experience in a work) and the second is the arousing of emotional states in the recipient; classic expression theory has come to focus on these two aspects. As the third phenomenon, Elzenberg enumerates 'animization' (*animizacja*), that is, ascribing a fictitious psyche to inanimate objects.[5] Thus we can say, for instance, that the sea 'grows angry' or that a weeping willow 'has grown sad'. This phenomenon is also considered by Elzenberg to be generally perceived in contemporary aesthetic literature.

But, over and above these three, he draws attention to a further phenomenon, one that he claims is more recondite than the others: a 'pure, subjectless emotional "quality" residing in an object […] that […] we might also figuratively call […] the emotional "colouring" of an object'.[6] By giving

3 No distinction between expressivity and expression in art is being made yet; the appropriate distinctions follow shortly.

4 Henryk Elzenberg, 'Zabarwienie uczuciowe jako zjawisko estetyczne', in *Pisma estetyczne* [Writings on aesthetics], ed. Lesław Hostyński (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 1999), 45–50. Originally published in *Prace ofiarowane Kazimierzowi Wóycickiemu* [Festschrift for Kazimierz Wóycicki], ed. Manfred Kridl (Vilnius: Dom Książki Polskiej, 1937), 483–91. Translated as 'Emotional Colouring as an Aesthetic Phenomenon' in this issue of *Estetika*.

5 See Elzenberg, 'Emotional Colouring', 212n1.

6 Elzenberg, 'Emotional Colouring', 213. Elzenberg himself (ibid.) says that he was inspired by the suggestions of three authors: the psychologist Oswald Külpe (1862–1915) and the phenomenologists Max Scheler (1874–1928) and Roman Ingarden (1893–1970), though he does not indicate which texts he has in mind. In a later article, he gives a reference only to Külpe, *Grundlagen der Ästhetik*, ed. Siegfried Behn (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1921), 101–2. See Henryk Elzenberg, 'Non-aesthetic and Aesthetic Expression', in this issue of *Estetika*, 224n5. As for Ingarden, the idea appears, for example, in the *The Work of Music and the Problem of Its Identity*, trans. Adam Czerniawski (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986). In this treatise Ingarden argues: 'We have […] to distinguish the emotional qualities rooted in the sounding material of the musical sound-constructs from feelings that the listener might experience [and from the] expressed feelings […] of the performer […] or of the composer.' (p. 101) Although the Polish original of this treatise did not appear until 1958, the signature beneath its conclusion ('Paris 1928 – Lviv 1933 – Kraków 1957') shows that it was a long time in the making and that work was certainly further prolonged by the impossibility of publication during the Second World War and then the Stalinist period in Poland (see n. 42 below). But, before publishing of Elzenberg's article in 1937, he may well have been aware of Ingarden's article 'Zagadnienie tożsamości dzieła muzycznego' [The problem of the identity of a work of music], *Przegląd Filozoficzny* 36 (1933): 320–62, on which the later treatise was based. This earlier article already mentions subjectless emotional qualities which can also belong to certain non-mental objects (pp. 359–60).

examples of expressivity which cannot be reduced to the three earlier types, Elzenberg substantiates his argument that such a phenomenon does indeed occur. When, for instance, someone says that a landscape is 'gloomy' or 'cheerful', this cannot mean that the real feelings of some animate being are manifesting themselves in it, nor does it necessarily mean that the observer, under the sway of the landscape, is overcome by such a feeling. As Elzenberg says, 'For lyric poetry, the divergence between our own mood and the mood of the world around us was such a common theme that it became rather banal'.[7]

There remains animization: the notional ascribing of a 'gloomy' or 'cheerful' psyche to a landscape. But when we use emotional terms in relation to objects not endowed with a psyche, are we always dealing with animization, with attributing a fictitious psyche to objects? When we perceive a sea as 'angry', do we only do so when we are inclined to say that it is 'angered' or that a weeping willow is 'sad' when it is 'saddened'? Apparently not, and Elzenberg also declares himself '*in favour of* the independent existence of emotional "colouring" and *against* the possibility of reducing it to any sort of lower-level animization'. He argues that 'all animization seems to *presuppose* [the prior existence of emotional "colouring"] and cannot occur at all until the observer has perceived some emotional colouring'.[8] This is because animization is never neutral and does not involve ascribing to an object a qualitatively indefinite psyche: 'We do not animize "in general"; a fort or a mountain peak is animized specifically as "proud", spring as "joyous", a sea on a stormy day as "angry", and so on.'[9] It is only because we discern in an object certain qualities which we perceive as emotional that we are at all inclined to animize that object, that is, to ascribe to it a fictitious psyche which might underlie the qualities we have already discerned. So the perceiving of these qualities must be the prior phenomenon. As we shall see below, it is precisely this phenomenon that Elzenberg considers the basis and essence of all aesthetic types of expressiveness, and thus of expression in art in particular.

But the assertion that the phenomenon of emotional colouring exists raises a question. Why do we describe certain qualities of inanimate objects using terms relating to feelings that such objects obviously cannot have? Elzenberg provides an answer, though with the reservation that it is only a suggestion and not a proposition of whose truth he is fully convinced, in contrast to the question of whether emotional colouring actually exists:

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7 Elzenberg, 'Emotional Colouring', 214.
8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.

> [I]f we feel compelled to use an emotional term to define that colouring quality, it is perhaps because, at a given moment, some emotional fact does actually occur and assumes a particular relationship with the object we are beholding; and the only place where this fact could arise is in the psyche of the observer himself.[10]

However, was emotional colouring not supposed to be a quality present in the sensory object itself, whose perception can be independent of the observer experiencing a corresponding feeling? Elzenberg suggests that it is possible to avoid a contradiction between the last two statements by postulating that the emotional fact discussed in the foregoing quotation need not be fully developed emotion, such as exists in our real mental life:

> And here is the hypothesis: that emotional fact would be emotional only through a certain quality that it possesses; besides that, it would discharge a cognitive function […]. It would be utterly devoid of such features of actual emotion as motivational force or a tendency to spill over into the whole of one's awareness and take over the whole of its content; its only function would be to reflect in the mind a certain quality of the object beheld – that very quality which we are calling emotional colouring.[11]

It does not appear inconsistent with Elzenberg's intentions if we say that this fact was supposed to be the act of experiencing a pure emotional quality outside the wider spectrum of mental phenomena with which real-life emotion is typically associated or of which full-blown emotion usually consists: most frequently it has a certain cause, usually a cause which we are aware of, typically some object or situation (we are happy or sad about something). As long as this cause lasts, it is difficult for us to free ourselves from the emotion it evokes. The emotion (love, anger, envy) is frequently directed towards something: it has an object. It is accompanied by some idea or expectation. Lastly, it can entail a certain inclination or desire to act. But the reaction evoked by the perception of the emotional colouring of a sensory object is devoid of such elements: it is limited to the very act of experiencing a pure emotional quality. Since this emotional quality is not directed towards any object,[12] it does not give rise to any expectations or any conscious motivation to perform specific actions. And since the only cause of this experience is perception of a sensory object, we retain complete control over our experience of this emotional quality: it disappears as soon as we decide to stop beholding that object.

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10 Ibid., 216.

11 Ibid.

12 Our attention is directed to the appearance of the object we perceive, but the emotional quality recognized in it is not. If someone were to claim that music is expressive of love, anger, or jealousy, then obviously not of love for, anger towards, or jealousy of the piece of music.

Elzenberg's suggestion may be seen as anticipating a theory of expression in art, which was later called 'weak arousal theory'.[13] (In that case, Elzenberg's vision would certainly be the weakest possible version of such a theory.) It may also be seen as a way of reconciling such theory with the so-called cognitivist position, which is perceived as being opposed to it.[14]

The classic (strong) version of arousal theory states that expressiveness simply amounts to the capacity to evoke certain emotions; that is, that something is expressive of a certain emotion if and only if it evokes (or at least has a tendency to evoke) that emotion in recipients. The reasons for rejecting this simplistic view have been presented many times; almost no one attempts to defend it. Elzenberg's remark (quoted above) on the divergence between our own mood and the mood of the world around us could legitimately be used as a standard argument against it.

The opposing view, sometimes called cognitivist, states that we do not experience the emotions expressed in a work of art; we merely recognize them as qualities of the work. On this view, expressive qualities are ascribed to the work of art itself and not, as in arousal theory, to elements external to it – namely, the feelings of the recipient. This might seem to be the position of Elzenberg as well, who, as we noted, sees the essence of the aesthetic variety of expression in the perception of emotional colouring.

Many authors express dissatisfaction, however, because this position appears to remove emotional reaction completely from the description of our interaction with art. Do we not value art precisely for its ability to move us? Would we be inclined to describe it in emotional terms if it did not arouse in us the emotions ascribed to it? In connection with this, these authors attempt to restore at least a limited role to aroused emotions in accounting for expressiveness in art, even if they do not go so far as to equate expressiveness with the evocation of emotions in a simple, naïve way, as was done above. That is why these theories are called 'weak arousal theories' or, more frequently, 'emotivist theories'.

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[13] Different versions of such theories, more often called emotivist theories, can be found, for example, in Donald Callen, 'The Sentiment in Musical Sensibility', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 40 (1982): 381–93; Colin Radford, 'Emotions and Music: A Reply to the Cognitivists', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 47 (1989): 69–76; Jerrold Levinson, 'Music and Negative Emotion' (1982), in *Music, Art, and Metaphysics: Essays in Philosophical Aesthetics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 306–35; Alan Goldman, 'Emotions in Music (A Postscript)', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 51 (1995): 59–69; Aaron Ridley, *Music, Value and the Passions* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), 120–45; and Jenefer Robinson, *Deeper than Reason: Emotion and Its Role in Literature, Music, and Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[14] Peter Kivy is considered to be its most prominent representative. See his *Music Alone: Philosophical Reflections on the Purely Musical Experience* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), especially chap. 8, 'How Music Moves', 146–72.

Since Elzenberg speaks about an emotional fact taking place in the recipient in connection with his perception of certain sensory objects (for example, works of art), prompting us to use emotional terms to describe their qualities, he may be cautiously deemed a representative of arousal theory. At the same time, this is perhaps the weakest possible version of such a theory. Not only is there no mention of full-blown, real emotion, but the emotional fact mentioned here is of the most attenuated kind, and its function is cognitive. We experience no full, real emotion, but only draw on our emotional sensitivity to recognize a certain quality of the observed object and define it as emotional colouring. In this way, Elzenberg could also be deemed an adherent of the cognitivist position. The only point on which he diverges from the orthodox cognitivism of Kivy is his acknowledgement that our recognition of emotional qualities involves not merely understanding them or reading them, but experiencing them or feeling them, which appears to correspond better to our experience of interacting with art and is a welcome concession to the emotivist position.

This type of compromise between the two positions appears close to Alan Goldman's formulation with respect to music:

> The correct middle view is not Kivy's new position that music has a tendency, unactualized for many listeners like him, to arouse ordinary emotions. It is rather that emotion states that are not ordinary or paradigm occur in the full engagement of typical listeners […]. The unusual features of these emotions […] are explained […] by our experiencing them in the context of being engaged in other ways as well with the works to which we react. Full appreciation […] normally requires some attention to form, for example, as well as affective reaction, and attention to such other matters is sufficient to block full-blown emotional reactions.[15]

The diagnosis that our reaction to expressive qualities is not ordinary, full-blown emotion that is expressed is absolutely correct and immediately renders superfluous the arguments of the cognitivists, who most often strive to prove just this.[16] Unfortunately, the conclusion that they typically draw from this correct and uncontroversial proposition is that if we do not experience the emotions expressed by music in a full-blown, ordinary way, we do not experience them at all. But if for some reason, for example, because of shadow or twilight, we do not perceive the colours of some object, and thus do not see it completely, that does

[15] Goldman, 'Emotions in Music', 66.

[16] See, for example, Kivy, *Music Alone*, 158ff. To be sure, Kivy grants that music may be deeply moving but he asserts that the emotions aroused are not those which are expressed. The object of the emotions aroused is music itself which 'moves us by various aspects of its musical beauty or perfection' (p. 161), not by its expressive qualities. Consequently, the emotions aroused do not explain, according to Kivy, the expressiveness of music.

not imply that we do not see it at all: we might, for instance, discern just the outline of its shapes. And just because we might not recognize the instrument with which some melody is being played (and perhaps we cannot even unambiguously make it out if, say, our radio has poor quality speakers), that does not mean we do not hear the melody itself. Similarly, it seems entirely credible that in addition to ordinary, full-blown emotions we can, under certain conditions, feel certain abstract, attenuated versions of them in the type of emotional fact described by Elzenberg.

However, while making the correct diagnosis, Goldman gives a rather unconvincing argument in favour of it: 'Full appreciation […] normally requires some attention to form, for example, as well as affective reaction, and attention to such other matters is sufficient to block full-blown emotional reactions.'[17] But what if someone does not attend to form and other non-expressive qualities of a work of art? Does he or she then experience 'full-blown' emotion? It appears that the emotional reaction to music is almost never of this type, since it does not include the typical elements of full-blown, ordinary emotion discussed above (the sources and causes of emotion, its objects, expectations connected with it, ideas or desires to act). This is not the subject's own emotion really experienced by it, but rather an external emotional quality that is merely beheld, similarly to how a moviegoer beholds the action presented in a film without actually participating in it. In other words, a full-blown emotional reaction does not have to be blocked, because listening to music simply does not give any basis for such a reaction.

We may also approach Goldman's argument from the opposite perspective, by considering ordinary emotion in real life: in experiencing such emotion, we are also sometimes engaged in other ways with the objects and situations that give rise to it: we look at a list of grades and are happy about a good grade in an examination, but at the same time we notice that our surname has been misspelled; we feel uneasy when travelling on the underground at night alone with just a couple of suspicious-looking types for company, and yet we punch our ticket, answer a question posed by one of our fellow passengers about the next stop, and so on. But does this mean that our full-blown emotional reaction is blocked by our attention to those additional matters, that we are not experiencing ordinary emotion anymore but rather the type of emotion that accompanies listening to music? That would obviously be a very strange conclusion.

It appears that our development of Elzenberg's suggestion better describes (and explains) the kind of attenuated emotional reaction that accompanies the perception of the emotional qualities of expressive objects, especially works of art. But this description does not yet conclude our explanation of the

[17] Goldman, 'Emotions in Music', 66.

phenomenon of emotional colouring. Even if we accept Elzenberg's suggestion that in response to the perception of some sensory objects a minimal emotional fact with a cognitive function occurs and explains our tendency to describe these objects in emotional terms, another question arises: Why do these kinds of emotional facts occur with respect to some, but by no means all, sensory objects'? To argue that it is because they have emotional qualities would obviously be circular. What is presumably called for is an answer in terms of more fundamental, elementary qualities traditionally ascribed to sensory objects, qualities that can be ascribed to them without controversy. This matter will be addressed in the second part of the following section.

III. …AND IN AMERICAN AESTHETICS

In American aesthetics, one of the first steps in the direction of seeking the expressivity of a work of art in the work itself – and not in the experiences of the artist or the recipient – was taken by Susanne Langer (1895–1985). In *Philosophy in a New Key*, Langer sharply criticizes the view that music's expressivity is to be explained in terms of the expression of real feelings, experiences, or other emotional states in the composer or the performer (which she calls self-expression) and that its emotional content consists in arousing certain feelings in the recipient.[18] The emotional content of a work of music is contained in the work itself, and Langer explains the grounds for this presence as follows:

> The tonal structures we call 'music' bear a close logical similarity to the forms of human feeling – forms of growth and of attenuation, flowing and stowing, conflict and resolution, speed, arrest, terrific excitement, calm, or subtle activation and dreamy lapses – not joy and sorrow perhaps, but the poignancy of either and both – the greatness and brevity and eternal passing of everything vitally felt. Such is the pattern, or logical form, of sentience; and the pattern of music is that same form worked out in pure, measured sound and silence. Music is a tonal analogue of emotive life.[19]

But the aestheticians usually associated with a fundamental breakthrough in thinking about the expressivity of art are Oets Kolk Bouwsma (1898–1978) and Monroe Beardsley (1915–1985). In his essay 'The Expression Theory of Art', from 1950, Bouwsma arrives at the conclusion that the typical models which were normally used to explain the phenomenon of expressivity in art – namely, the model of expressing emotions and the model of expressing in language –, let us

[18] Susanne K. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1942), chap. 8, 'On Significance in Music', esp. 214–17.

[19] This quotation comes from a later book by Langer, *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art* (New York: Scribner's, 1953), 27, in which she recapitulates the main theses on music presented in *Philosophy in a New Key*.

down and lead to misunderstandings.[20] He therefore proposes abandoning those analogies and accepting that what we usually call the expressivity of works of art amounts simply to certain properties belonging to those works themselves:

> now, unabashed, we shall say that the music is sad, and we shall not go on to say that this means that the music expresses sadness. For the sadness is to the music rather like the redness to the apple, than it is like the burp to the cider. And above all we shall not, having heard the music or read the poem, ask, 'What does it express?'[21]

A similar stance was adopted by the much better known and influential American aesthetician Monroe Beardsley, in 1958:

> The Expression Theory has called our attention to an important fact about music – namely, that it has human regional qualities [elsewhere Beardsley also speaks of *feeling qualities*]. But in performing this service it has rendered itself obsolete. We now have no further use for it. Indeed we are much better off without it. 'The music is joyous' is plain and can be defended. 'The music expresses joy' adds nothing except unnecessary and unanswerable questions. For 'express' is properly a relational term; it requires an X that does the expressing and a Y that is expressed, and X and Y must be distinct. When we say that a rose is red, we have only one thing, namely the rose, and we describe its quality; in exactly the same way, when we say the music is joyous, we have only one thing, namely the music, and we describe its quality. There is no need for the term 'express'.[22]

As we can see, Bouwsma and Beardsley stand at the opposite pole from classic expression theory: whilst advocates of classic expression theory interpret the emotional content of art as the expression of the artist's feelings, that is, something external to the art itself, Bouwsma and Beardsley, focusing on the properties of the work itself, completely dissociate themselves from such a model and from any sort of link between the expressivity of art and the human expression of emotions.

But why do we use emotional categories at all to denominate these properties? Bouwsma's answer to this question is by no means original (and Beardsley's opinion in this matter is similar): 'Sad music has some of the characteristics of people who are sad. It will be slow, not tripping: it will be low, not tinkling. People who are sad move more slowly, and when they speak, they speak softly and low.'[23]

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20 Oets Kolk Bouwsma, 'The Expression Theory of Art', in *Philosophical Analysis*, ed. Max Black (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1950), 71–96. But the argument that the expression of emotions is not a good model for expression in art – an argument presented in just a few sentences (first paragraph, p. 87) – is itself disappointing and certainly much less convincing than in Langer.

21 Ibid., 94.

22 Monroe Beardsley, *Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism* (New York: Harcourt, 1958), 321–22.

23 Bouwsma, 'Expression Theory', 95.

In this way, he subscribes to one of the two main traditions occurring over the course of history. Like so many things in philosophy, they originate in the writings of Plato and Aristotle respectively. According to the first, which could be called the paradigm of externality,[24] music has emotional content because of the resemblance of its melodic, dynamic, rhythmical, and other structures to the typical forms taken by the natural expression of emotion in the human voice, body movement, and posture. According to the second, which in turn might be called the paradigm of internality, music has such a content by means of its resemblance to the emotions themselves and not to any external signs of them.[25]

At the end of the fifteenth century, Plato's dialogues were translated from Greek into Latin by the Florentine humanist and philosopher Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499), and the process of their modern reception began. The influential Italian music theorist Gioseffo Zarlino (1517–1590) quoted the passages containing the suggestion of the externality position from *The Republic*, and then the no-less-influential Florentine Camerata (responsible for the birth of opera, around 1600, and of the Baroque era in music) adopted that approach,[26] which remained predominant – in the form of the so-called *Affektenlehre* – up to the eighteenth century.

But then, around the turn of the nineteenth century, at the onset of Romanticism, a paradigm shift occurred. Probably one of the first to bring that shift about was the German Romantic Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder (1773–1798): 'Just so it is with *the mysterious stream in the depths of the human soul*; words mention and name and describe its flux in a foreign medium. In music, however, the stream itself seems to be released.'[27] The internality view then received a famous formulation in the work of Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860) and became popularly accepted for more than a century. It has been espoused, in one way or another, by Eduard Hanslick (1825–1904), the philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey (1833–1911), the musicologist Hermann Kretzschmar (1848–1924), the founder of what is known as musical hermeneutics, the psychologists Wolfgang Köhler (1887–1967) and Carroll Pratt (1894–1979), and many others. Langer, as exemplified in her statement quoted above, is among the last authors to represent this view within the period of its domination starting around 1800.[28] Even as late as 1959, we can still read in a work by Deryck Cooke: 'The true

[24] As indicated, for example, in *Rep.* 399a–c, and *Lg.* 654e–655b, 669c.

[25] Arist. *Pol.* 8, 5, 1340a–b.

[26] Peter Kivy, who in *The Corded Shell: Reflections on Musical Expression* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980) formulated the modern version of this paradigm, suggests that it was the Camerata who first expressed this view (p. 51). He was apparently ignorant of the fact that they had adopted it from Plato.

[27] Wilhelm H. Wackenroder, *Phantasien über die Kunst* (1799), quoted in Oskar Walzel, *German Romanticism*, trans. Alma E. Lussky (New York: Putnam's, 1932), 123, my italics.

[28] Elsewhere she speaks explicitly about music's similarity to 'inner life'. See, for example, Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key*, 228.

expressive difference between the arts is that painting conveys feeling through a visual image, and literature through a rationally intelligible statement, but music conveys the naked feeling direct.'[29] But by the middle of the twentieth century, it seemed time for another paradigm shift; that is, a return to the Platonic view of externality, as exemplified in Bouwsma's statement. Even though this conception subsequently dominated aesthetics during the second half of the twentieth century,[30] it still had its opponents, such as Malcolm Budd, who claims that its 'application is exceedingly narrow' and that 'music can penetrate beneath the surface of emotion to its innermost core: music is not restricted to the outer world of expression of emotion but reaches as far as the inner world of emotion itself. I believe that this is so.'[31] Also Jerrold Levinson, who essentially subscribes to the externality view, at the same time proposes to reclaim 'the relevance that the dynamic and phenomenological dimension of an emotion's inner aspect, and not just its behaviourally constituted aspect, can have'.[32] And Aaron Ridley, who in 1995 accepted the prevailing Platonic paradigm,[33] in his later book discusses some arguments in favour of both the externalist and internalist positions.[34]

Yet the two paradigms, the Platonic and the Aristotelian, of externality and of internality, are not as remote from each other as one might suppose, and they are certainly not in direct contradiction to one another. It is by no means implausible, and it is even to be expected, that the natural, public expression of certain feelings bears structural and dynamic similarities to our privately felt experience of those feelings as we perceive them introspectively. Hence one might suppose that the two theories actually converge with respect to those feelings which have natural forms of expression associated with them. Yet the two theories are certainly not entirely equivalent.

Only the externalist explanation appears to be empirically verifiable, because it refers to the intersubjectively accessible, external expression of emotions. Undoubtedly, it was this advantage that allowed it to dominate analytic philosophy, most frequently with an empirical, naturalistic orientation – sober and straightforward. Kivy certainly finds this to be the essential advantage of this

29 Deryck Cooke, *The Language of Music* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 20–21.

30 Besides Bouwsma and Beardsley, one would mention, for example, Kivy, *Corded Shell*; Jerrold Levinson, 'Hope in *The Hebrides*', in *Music, Art, and Metaphysics*, 336–75; Stephen Davies, *Musical Meaning and Expression* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994); and Ridley, *Music, Value and the Passions*.

31 Malcolm Budd, *Values of Art: Pictures, Poetry and Music* (London: Penguin, 1995), 157, and *Music and the Emotions* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985), 175–76.

32 Jerrold Levinson, 'Musical Expressiveness', in *The Pleasures of Aesthetics: Philosophical Essays* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 114.

33 Ridley, *Music, Value and the Passions*.

34 Aaron Ridley, *The Philosophy of Music: Theme and Variations* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 73–74.

explanation: 'If the criteria of human expression are public, objective, immune from philosophical scepticism, so too are the criteria of expressiveness in music.'[35]

But the connection between music and the external expression of emotion appears to be relatively superficial and seems not to explain why the recognition of this similarity should determine the value of music. On the other hand, the postulated similarity to the internal aspect of feeling appears to give music a more intimate connection with the essence of our mental life and enable deeper insight into it, thereby providing a more convincing explanation of music's resultant value. Moreover, internalism appears to have an advantage in that it can explain the presence in music of moods and feeling tones that are not typically connected with any external expression.

The leading advocates of either view enumerated above – from Plato to Kivy – usually have not even mentioned the possibility of the opposite standpoint, let alone provided any arguments against it and in favour of their own. Thus it might seem that the choice of one or the other was down to the spirit of the times and philosophical taste rather than the conclusion of any argument. Only the most recent authors (Budd, Levinson, Ridley) take notice of both views. The main reason Budd gives for his preference for the internalist position is his strong belief, as expressed in the quotation above. Levinson merely suggests that the internalist view should also be taken into account besides the dominating externalist view (see the quotation above). Only Ridley presents some reasons to prefer one view or the other but without any hint that they might decide the case. In fact he even says: 'It may be, of course, that the truth lies somewhere between these views.'[36]

One might cautiously say that both positions are too one-sided to be able to refer to all types of emotional qualities in music or other sensory objects. Perhaps we should concur with Budd: 'a new theory of music is needed; and if this theory is to be revealing it will, I believe, have to be less monolithic than the theories I have rejected'.[37] So perhaps it is naive to think that it is possible completely to support one paradigm or the other to the exclusion of the other.

At least the externalist position is known to Elzenberg, who mentions one more possible explanation (in addition to the two discussed above) of the presence of emotional qualities in physical objects.[38] He does not, however, support any of the accounts. Likewise, he suspends his judgement on this matter in his later, longer, article on expression.[39] He was clearly of the opinion that all potential explanations were far from satisfying. Elzenberg could have refrained from

35 Kivy, *Corded Shell*, 68.
36 Ridley, *Philosophy of Music*, 74.
37 Budd, *Music and the Emotions*, 176.
38 Elzenberg, 'Emotional Colouring', 213.
39 Elzenberg, 'Non-aesthetic and Aesthetic Expression'.

passing judgement on the question because, as we will see, the further part of his theory of expression is not dependent on any particular explanation of emotional colouring. We need only accept the fact of its existence, that is, that certain sensory objects have certain emotional qualities.

This assumption, accepted by Bouwsma and Beardsley, prompted them to make some quite controversial claims. As we recall, in interpreting the emotional content of a work of art as certain qualities of it, they simultaneously rejected out of hand any appeal to the human expression of emotion and distanced themselves from the language of expression in aesthetics. 'The Expression Theory […] has rendered itself obsolete. […] There is no need for the term "express".'[40] '[W]e shall not, having heard the music or read the poem, ask, "What does it express?"'[41] This is particularly odd in the context of Bouwsma's explanation of the reasons why we are inclined to call music 'sad' (and Beardsley's opinion in this matter is similar), which points precisely to a similarity with the natural expression of emotions. They should therefore admit that even if 'sad' music is not simply an expression of someone's emotions, it is at least something 'expression-like' or quasi-expressive.

Moreover, even if we agree that emotional content in art is above all a question of certain qualities of *the work itself*, the widespread tendency to perceive and understand them as the expression of some subject (most commonly the artist) calls for some explanation (interpretation rather than negation) – an interpretation which at the same time would not (unlike some versions of classic expression theory) violate the equally common conviction of the autonomy and inherent value of the works of art themselves. Works of art are not, after all, reducible to merely the means of acquainting ourselves with the mental content of the artists.

IV. A RETURN TO EXPRESSIVITY AS EXPRESSION

This intuition was followed once again by Elzenberg, who in a later article, 'Non-aesthetic and Aesthetic Expression', written in 1950,[42] formulates his initial problem

40 Beardsley, *Aesthetics*, 321–22.

41 Bouwsma, 'Expression Theory', 94.

42 Henryk Elzenberg, 'Ekspresja pozaestetyczna i estetyczna', in *Pisma estetyczne*, 50–68. Originally published in *Estetyka* 1 (1960): 49–65. Translated as 'Non-aesthetic and Aesthetic Expression' in this issue of *Estetika*. Although Elzenberg's article was published in 1960, according to a footnote it was written in 1950. In this case, the lengthy period between writing and publication was due to historical and political factors. In Poland, the years 1950–56 saw the most austere Stalinist totalitarianism. Elzenberg, along with other philosophers who failed to express their accession to the only 'right' philosophy of Marxism-Leninism, was relieved of his teaching duties during that time, and his publishing works of any kind was also obviously out of the question. In 1951–52, he wrote one more essay on expression, developing further some of the ideas presented in 'Non-aesthetic and Aesthetic Expression'. It has been published only posthumously under the title 'Estetyczne uroki ekspresji' [The aesthetic value of expression], in *Pisma estetyczne*, 209–34.

as follows: how can we understand, in the domain of aesthetics, expression 'in the proper sense', that is, the 'manifestation, through sensorially perceptible and thus physical objects […], of mental "content" […] belonging to some being actually endowed with a psyche'?[43] Taking this question as his point of departure, around the time when Bouwsma and Beardsley were publishing their theories that completely renounce the language of expression in aesthetics, he elaborated a conception that somehow reconciled the two different points of view: expressivity as a property and expressivity as the artist's expression.

To begin with, Elzenberg observes that many instances of expression in the proper sense are not of an aesthetic character. His examples include tears on a book indicating the emotions felt by the reader or a crumpled and torn tissue in the corner of a settee, testifying to the distress of its owner. In this connection, he asks what distinguishes aesthetic from non-aesthetic expression. His argumentation leads him to a condition that expression must fulfil in order to be considered aesthetic: 'an image of mental content must be given not *by the intermediary of* a symptom, but together with it, directly, such that image and symptom might be grasped together in a single act of perception'.[44] And to illustrate his idea he makes a vivid comparison:

> mental content must be given in the symptom – or on it – more or less like moisture in a sponge, a scent in the air, sheen on snow or poetry in a sonnet, or, perhaps more bluntly, like wetness in water or greenness on a leaf. […] This content, to put it slightly less vividly, must be simply *read* by the observer from the symptom. Or to put it completely drily: the observer must *find* it on the symptom. In short, this may be called the *immanence* of the mental object in the symptom […].[45]

The parallel between this formulation and Bouwsma's 'redness of an apple' or Beardsley's 'redness of a rose' is, of course, patent.

So the mental content conveyed in aesthetic expression must consist of those mental qualities of the expressive object which are familiar from Elzenberg's earlier article. Therefore, whereas in the earlier article Elzenberg argued that something like emotional colouring belonging to objects that are perceptible to the senses does exist, he is now arguing that it is essentially the heart of expression in its aesthetic variety, in other words, it is the necessary condition of expression having aesthetic quality.

This conclusion accords with the stance taken by Bouwsma and Beardsley. But, in discerning qualities of this sort, they concluded that speaking about expression

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43 Elzenberg, 'Non-aesthetic and Aesthetic Expression', 217.
44 Ibid., 222.
45 Ibid., 222–223.

in relation to art was superfluous and would even lead to notional confusion and misunderstanding. So how does Elzenberg avoid this sort of reductionistic conclusion and make good on his promise to find an aesthetic variety of expression in the proper sense?

Elzenberg agrees that the first, most fundamental, and, as he puts it, 'aesthetically purest' variety of the perception of emotional content in art is the perception of certain emotional qualities in a work of art. He observes, however, that quite often our perception does not remain exclusively on this level of purely qualitative reception:

> once a mental quality has appeared on an object, it insistently demands that some psyche – one in which it can 'settle' – should be produced, composed, or dreamt up for it. And […] before the observer knows it, the qualities have already drawn that psyche with them automatically, as it were, deep into the object. What follows […] is what we this time denote by the term *animization* [*animizacja*]: the attribution of a psyche to things not endowed with one. Of course, that psyche is not neutral, indeterminate; the object receives those experiences and dispositions which correspond to the quality observed [in the object].[46]

This is how we animize many natural objects in particular: 'mountains and rivers, wind and the night'. And the psyche ascribed to them is, for obvious reasons, 'entirely, unequivocally fictitious'.[47]

However, Elzenberg also points to a further type of reception, a further variety of our attitude to objects characterized by emotional qualities, which is like the next stage in animization and concerns only such objects as are somehow associated with an actual human psyche – namely, human artefacts. Objects of this kind, particularly works of art, may of course be animized in the same way as natural objects: 'it is [not] Beethoven who at a given moment relinquishes his internal struggles and falls into an ecstasy of joy, […] it is the Ninth Symphony, the content-laden sound mass'.[48] In this case, there are two psyches associated with the object. First, there is the fictitious, imagined psyche of the Ninth Symphony, filled with exactly the content that we discerned as emotional colouring in the object itself. This is therefore the 'immanent psyche of an aesthetic object'. And then there is the real psyche of the composer, transcending the aesthetic object, and linked to it only genetically. This real psyche does not fictitiously belong to the aesthetic object, but actually belongs to some real human being – here, Beethoven. In this situation, there occurs, however, a natural tendency to identify these two psyches with one another:

46 Ibid., 226–227.
47 Ibid., 228.
48 Ibid., 229.

> we now somehow *identify* the psyche that we ascribed by way of animization to the object with the psyche of an actual human being, with which the object maintains a factual link; we lose the sense of difference so thoroughly that we no longer have two psyches, the fictitious and the real, within our field of vision, but only one, which belongs to both the object and a person. It soon turns out, however, that this is not identification on equal terms: the real human psyche is stronger than the fictitious, flimsy mental life of the object and consequently has a tendency to *oust* it from awareness. And ultimately what was identification can even become the *substitution* of the human psyche for the psyche of the symptom: now, it is no longer the actual symphony that rejoices or breaks down, but that person within it, embodied in it, as it were, who thus shaped it. And the same applies in other cases: it is not *through* the symptom, but in the symptom itself, as its content, that the person manifests himself.[49]

One might go so far as to surmise that these two psyches often do not even appear as separate in the awareness of the recipient, but rather from the start as a composite, which Elzenberg defines as the outcome of the process of identification, that is, as a conglomerate of the two: as a psyche which we call by the artist's name (and which we imagine to be his or her psyche) but which possesses qualitative endowments that are wholly derived from the emotional colouring of the work itself. Thus the work, in a tautological way, becomes an adequate image and expression of that psyche – just as in ordinary animization. Unlike in ordinary animization, however, the expressed psyche is understood as the real psyche of the composer and not as the unequivocally fictitious psyche of the work. It is not the Ninth Symphony that 'grows angry', but 'Beethoven' embodied in it.

Since the mental content which is manifest in the work belongs, at least notionally, to a certain being who is indeed endowed with a psyche (that is, the composer), and not, as in ordinary animization, to an object which is not actually endowed with a psyche and only 'possesses' one in an unequivocally fictitious way, we may reasonably conclude that we are dealing with an instance of expression in the proper sense. But because this content is at the same time directly present in the work of art as its emotional qualities, we may regard this expression as aesthetic: 'And that is just how expression in the proper sense, in its aesthetic variety, would look. Or, perhaps more in keeping with the actual state of affairs, that is what that expression, in order to be aesthetic, must transform itself into.'[50] This means that it is not, literally speaking, expression in the proper sense. In truth, the mental content manifest in this expression does not belong to a real psyche; we only imagine that it does. In other words, we ascribe the mental content derived from the work itself to a certain imagined human subject, whom we most often imaginatively identify with the work's creator. Thus the

[49] Ibid., 230.
[50] Ibid., 231.

perception of a work as the expression of its creator is only an elaborate rhetorical figure, even if we are sometimes not fully aware of its figurative character. It would therefore seem that in this case we understand expressivity as the *expression of a fictitious human subject*.

V. CONCLUSION

Elzenberg's conception appears to do justice to the strong and generalized tendency to understand art as expression – something which cannot be said of the contemporary conceptions of Bouwsma and Beardsley, which would banish expression quite one-sidedly from the language of aesthetics. At the same time, Elzenberg's interpretation does not undermine another powerful conviction, that of the autonomy of the work of art (after all, the 'artist's psyche' is derived entirely from the work) – an accusation that could have been levelled at classic expression theory from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Unfortunately, Elzenberg's work was not translated into English. Anglo-Saxon aesthetics found itself under the overwhelming influence of the one-sided stance of Bouwsma and Beardsley. When this position eventually triggered opposition, aimed at rehabilitating the widespread use of the term 'expression' in relation to art, Anglo-Saxon aestheticians spent the next forty years or so elaborating a multi-dimensional and well-balanced conception similar to that devised by Elzenberg, at the same time naturally discussing many specific matters not raised by him.

On the one hand, there arose more detailed conceptions in relation to particular artistic disciplines. Like the conceptions of Bouwsma and Beardsley, they placed the emphasis on the interpretation of emotional content as properties, with the intention of correcting the faults of classic expression theory, yet they did not renounce completely their link with expression and the use of that term. They merely proposed speaking of expressivity and not of expression in the proper sense. Typical examples are the music-related conceptions of Peter Kivy and Stephen Davies,[51] from the 1980s and 1990s. The latter, for example, speaks of 'emotion characteristics in appearances' very much as Elzenberg speaks of emotional qualities or colouring in sensory objects.

On the other hand, there also appeared attempts to rehabilitate the term 'expression' in its original, proper sense. One of the first such attempts, referring solely to the fine arts, dates from 1965.[52] In relation to music (although primarily music with words), a conception of the expression of a fictitious subject was first

[51] Kivy, *Corded Shell*; Stephen Davies, 'The Expression of Emotion in Music', *Mind* 89 (1980): 67–86, and *Musical Meaning and Expression*.

[52] Guy Sircello, 'Perceptual Acts and Pictorial Art: A Defense of Expression Theory', *Journal of Philosophy* 42 (1965): 669–77.

proposed, as Jerrold Levinson states,[53] by Edward T. Cone in 1974.[54] In 1982, music in general, not necessarily with words, was considered by Donald Callen, who notes that expressivity may be understood not only as the presence of some or other qualities of a certain impersonal object (an acoustic product), but also as the fictitious expression of someone's emotional states.[55] We find similar suggestions made in 1985 by Jenefer Robinson, in relation to literature, and in 1986 by Bruce Vermazen, in relation to art in general.[56] Not until the 1990s did the concept of the expression of a fictitious subject become more widely disseminated and discussed. The most mature, comprehensive, and persuasive version of this concept – in essence the closest to Elzenberg's, though more elaborate than his – is the theory put forward in 1995 by Aaron Ridley, again formulated in relation to music.[57] Like Elzenberg, Ridley sees the construct of a fictitious subject (called a 'persona' in this conception) as only one of the possible ways of perceiving music.[58] But in the following year (1996), another work appeared, Levinson's 'Musical Expressiveness', burdened – as in Bouwsma and Beardsley – with the typical overstatement of a single model. Levinson's work includes the suggestion that the construction (notion) of a fictitious subject appears whenever we hear music as expressive, that the expressivity of music is simply (always!) hearing it as the expression of a fictitious subject.[59] So this is the opposite pole to Bouwsma and Beardsley. In turn, dissatisfaction with such a one-dimensional view has helped to inspire recent articles by Robert Stecker[60] and Saam Trivedi,[61] who state, correctly, that when receiving music as expressive, we by no means always imagine a fictitious person as the subject of that expression. Seeking an alternative conception, Trivedi makes the 'discovery' that another, frequent, way of perceiving the expressivity of music is … the animization of the music itself. 'Discovery' in inverted commas, since animization, as we remember from

53 Levinson, 'Musical Expressiveness', 107n55.

54 Edward T. Cone, *The Composer's Voice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974).

55 Callen, 'Sentiment in Musical Sensibility'.

56 Jenefer Robinson, 'Style and Personality in the Literary Work', *Philosophical Review* 94 (1985): 227–47; Bruce Vermazen, 'Expression as Expression', *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 67 (1986): 196–224.

57 Ridley, *Music, Value and the Passions*, 171–91.

58 It should be mentioned that since then Ridley seems to have abandoned his insightful and cogent theory. In 'Expression in Art', in *The Oxford Handbook of Aesthetics*, ed. Jerrold Levinson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 211–27, Ridley argues for a return to a version of classic expression theory, according to which there is no essential difference between artistic and ordinary expression.

59 Levinson, 'Musical Expressiveness', 107.

60 Robert Stecker, 'Expressiveness and Expression in Music and Poetry', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 59 (2001): 85–96.

61 Saam Trivedi, 'Expressiveness as a Property of the Music Itself', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 59 (2001): 411–20.

Elzenberg's first article, was already a widely known and accepted phenomenon in aesthetic literature during the 1930s.

Against this background, Elzenberg's theory, as comprehensive, multi-dimensional, and well-balanced as it is, still – half a century after its publication – stands out as exceptionally perceptive. It anticipates, in the highly succinct form of an article of less than twenty pages, and at the same time 'summarizes' fifty years' work in the development of certain notions of expressivity.

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HENRYK ELZENBERG: EMOTIONAL COLOURING AS AN AESTHETIC PHENOMENON

The aim of the following is to present a concise summary of a relatively fixed opinion held by the author and a suggestion, as yet rather vague, relating to that opinion. In connection with this, I would ask the reader from the start to adopt a different attitude to the lengthier first part (where, despite the brevity of the exposition, I will attempt to use normal argumentation) from the attitude he or she takes to the ending, to which an excessively vehement theoretical resistance would seem premature and disproportionate to the utter lack of aggressiveness with which the idea is put forward.

The matter addressed here concerns those aesthetic facts which, for want of a better term and in a very broad sense, may be called 'expressive phenomena'. It is not easy to give their common features; in approximation, one may say that in all kinds of expression we are dealing with some property of an object involving a link between that object and some mental fact which, in the vast majority of cases, is of an emotional nature. There are several such kinds of expression. First of all, expressivity in the narrower sense, or expressivity proper, is that property of some objects accessible to sensory observation thanks to which those objects reveal to the observer, directly (that is, not through inference) and in a natural way (that is, without familiarity with any convention), mental content of some being endowed with a psyche. Thus, wide-open eyes are 'expressive' in that they manifest astonishment; erratic, untidy handwriting in that it betrays an unsettled soul; a whole stanza of plangent or hollow sounds, filled with images of decline, decay, and passing in that it expresses sorrow or gloom. Next we would have the phenomenon of the triggering of emotional states in the observer himself, as when march music rouses, a scene in a melodrama terrifies, or the sight of blooming shrubs in spring gladdens and cheers. And finally the phenomenon of animization, well known and described many times,[1] in which – be it through a certain play of the imagination, from which one may withdraw at any time, or with the utmost faith and conviction (such animization 'in earnest' is not inseparably linked with an aesthetic attitude, though it does not preclude such

['Zabarwienie uczuciowe jako zjawisko estetyczne', in *Prace ofiarowane Kazimierzowi Wóycickiemu* [Festschrift for Kazimierz Wóycicki], ed. Manfred Kridl (Vilnius: Dom Książki Polskiej, 1937), 483–91, reprinted in Henryk Elzenberg, *Pisma estetyczne* [Writings on aesthetics], ed. Lesław Hostyński (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 1999), 45–50.]

[1] [A familiar term in Polish scholarly texts, animization (*animizacja*) signifies the fictitious, rhetorical and temporary ascription of a psyche or psychic qualities to inanimate objects and natural phenomena, for purely aesthetic purposes, rather like personification.]

an attitude) – we ascribe certain mental content to an object not endowed with a psyche, and so anger to the waves of the sea, pride to a fort, grimness and foreboding to a crag. Thus we have enumerated three phenomena, the aesthetic import of which is variously appraised, but the existence of which would not appear to be the object of dispute. Many aestheticians are inclined to assume that these three phenomena exhaust the possibilities in the area under discussion.

It seems to me, however, that some sound experts on the subject (Oswald Külpe, Max Scheler, and, in Poland, Roman Ingarden) have hit on the trail of yet another phenomenon, more recondite than those three and not reducible to any one of them. This would be some pure, subjectless, emotional 'quality' residing in an object, something that, for the sake of convenience and brevity, we might also figuratively call, as we did in the title, the emotional 'colouring' of an object, something that would be neither the manifestation, in extra-mental material, of specific mental content, nor fictitious mental content ascribed to an object not endowed with a psyche, nor the triggering, through an object, of emotional states in the observer. When we say of a musical motif that it is 'sad', we can understand by this that it expresses the sadness of the composer or that it arouses sadness in ourselves, or that, beyond the notes, we imagine something like a soul, to which those notes would be like a sounding body and to which we would ascribe sorrow. But we can also understand a fourth thing. We can, without any thought of the creator, without feeling sorrow ourselves and without animizing at all, understand that the very notes, as notes, contain the 'quality' of sorrow, or that they are 'coloured' with sorrow. That is what is sometimes claimed. But can a phenomenon of this kind really be ascertained? Is it not simply a delusion on the part of over-subtle theorists craving new discoveries and new refinements of old themes? That will be our first question, before we can pose the second: *what*, if they exist, might those qualities be and how can they be explained? The first question might perhaps be clarified in the following way: is it possible to cite instances in which an aesthetic object is described using terms denoting emotional states and in which the use of such terms could not be explained in the sense of expression proper, the triggering of emotions or animization? If so, then we would have established the fourth phenomenon, and it would be precisely that phenomenon which had been assumed to exist.

In my opinion, the answer to that question is affirmative; and I will attempt to argue the case. I will start with an example, choosing the most convenient one to hand, previously used by Scheler, of a landscape that someone declares to be 'sad' or 'merry', 'gloomy' or 'cheerful'. Of course, one of the possible interpretations would fall by the wayside at once: when using such adjectives we certainly do

not understand that some real psyche, different from the psyche of the observer, might manifest itself in the lines and colours of the landscape. That is beyond doubt. Someone might be inclined to say, however, that whenever we call a landscape 'bleak' and so on, it means that the landscape arouses the corresponding feeling within us. But again there is no doubt that one may well note a certain emotional tone in the object being observed without adopting that tone oneself; that one can sense a forest to be 'gloomy' or a lake to be 'melancholy' (just like a song, poem, or symphony, to say nothing of a decorative motif) without experiencing gloominess, melancholy, or other feelings oneself. For lyric poetry, the divergence between our own mood and the mood of the world around us was such a common theme that it became rather banal. So there would be just one way left to account for such cases of animization. When I sense a landscape that I am looking at to be gloomy though it does not make me feel gloomy myself, this would mean that I imagine it to be endowed with a psyche.

It may be said that this last statement is all but impossible to verify empirically. Animization has various degrees, ranging from distinct personification, distinctly conducted, to various borderline phenomena that are barely noticeable. Thus anyone so inclined can always advance the hypothesis of some barely perceptible, minimal animization, be it that we ascribe to the object merely a trace of a real psyche, like an indistinct awareness, as in Leibniz's lower-level monads, or that our very act of attribution is rather weak: fleeting, barely detached from the mental background, effected with the smallest possible dose of conviction, and so on. With regard to such shadow phenomena, it will always be equally possible either to deny their presence or to insist on that presence: this slippery material eludes introspection, which must resign itself to leaving the matter unresolved. Yet there is another argument, less fundamentally empirical, which appears to speak *in favour* of the independent existence of emotional 'colouring' and *against* the possibility of reducing it to any sort of lower-level animization. That is the fact that all animization seems to presuppose the phenomenon under discussion and cannot occur at all until the observer has perceived some emotional colouring.

Animization, let us repeat – and this trait brings it so close to the phenomenon of expression proper as to make it almost its variant – never consists simply in ascribing a psyche to an object not endowed with one. There is no such thing as neutral animization, animization *per se*. It also involves ascribing to an object a psyche and mental content of specific characteristics. We do not animize 'in general'; a fort or a mountain peak is animized specifically as 'proud', spring as 'joyous', a sea on a stormy day as 'angry', and so on. The ascribing of a psyche with specific qualities is by no means due to chance: it is dictated more or less precisely and unequivocally by the object's appearance. We animize a peak as 'proud'

because we *see* it as proud; we project pride into its fictitious psyche because we read that quality in its appearance; that is, we perceive emotional colouring before proceeding to animization; and it is that colouring which determines the direction of the animization. Admittedly, a theorist may, through various analyses, attempt to eliminate that elementary fact of direct 'reading', reducing it to some other fact; he might say, for example, that a peak seems to us to be 'proud' and waves 'angry' by way of analogy with the demeanour and movements of a *person* experiencing such feelings; or that mountain crags seem to us to be 'forbidding' and 'fields painted with manifold crops'[2] joyous because the former – not necessarily at this particular moment in time – bring to mind a crag's inherent dangers and the latter evoke an image of bounteous harvests, pleasing and beneficial to man. Yet, valid or spurious, theories of that sort, when introduced into our discussion, do not achieve their purpose. They are *genetic* theories, stating that the phenomenon of emotional colouring *arose* in such and such a way; but such statements by no means signify that the thing being genetically explained has somehow merged with that from which it arose and has ceased to exist as something separate. One cannot demonstrate that something is not what it is because it 'arose' from something else.

And the distinct character of emotional colouring will not be undermined by its genesis being explained in one way or another. Thus the presence of this phenomenon at the start of all animization seems ultimately to suggest itself, and instances in which emotional colouring arises would thereby be confirmed.

Emotional colouring will be more difficult to analyse and explain than to ascertain; I shall venture to do so here only in some small part. What is paradoxical in this phenomenon and may arouse protests is that terms commonly used to designate emotional states are used here in relation to an object that has no feelings itself, is incapable of experiencing them, is not considered to be such an object and does not arouse feelings in the observer; gloominess, sorrow, and joy are perceived to be emotional 'colouring' despite the fact that nowhere, even by supposition, do we perceive those feelings as actually experienced, in connection with a given object, by some subject. This is what requires explanation: why do we designate a perceived quality with just such a term? And in what peculiar sense can that quality be regarded as 'emotional'?

And here we arrive at what I called at the start a mere suggestion and what – I would stress – I do not wish to put forward as a fixed opinion; let us say that it is a hypothesis which I find alluring, but which at the present time I would not dare to push. As we emphasized above, in the case in hand, the observer, perceiving

[2] [A quotation from Adam Mickiewicz's national epic *Pan Tadeusz* (1811–12).]

in an object some particular emotional colouring, does not himself experience a feeling that would correspond to that colouring. On the other hand, if we feel compelled to use an emotional term to define that colouring quality, it is perhaps because, at a given moment, some emotional fact does actually occur and assumes a particular relationship with the object we are beholding; and the only place where this fact could arise is in the psyche of the observer himself. These two statements might easily seem contradictory, but we can avoid that contradiction insofar as we assume that there occurs in the observer something which is a peculiar kind of *emotional* fact but at the same time is not an *emotion* that is actually experienced. And here is the hypothesis: that emotional fact would be emotional only through a certain quality that it possesses; besides that, it would discharge a cognitive function, constituting something similar to what Meinong calls 'emotional presentation' and for which we might also introduce the name 'emotional schema' or 'cognitive-emotional schema'. It would be utterly devoid of such features of actual emotion as motivational force or a tendency to spill over into the whole of one's awareness and take over the whole of its content; its only function would be to reflect in the mind a certain quality of the object beheld – that very quality which we are calling emotional colouring. The relationship between the emotional fact and that quality would be analogous to the relationship between a representation and a represented thing; the quality, meanwhile, would be 'emotional' only insofar as it could be revealed to a subject solely by means of a schema or presentation of that kind. Thus an answer to the question as to the nature of emotional colouring would fall – were we to elaborate it according to those general opening considerations – within the framework of a formula more or less as follows: this is a quality of an object distinguished by the fact that it is cognized in some peculiar way – namely, thanks to certain schemata, cognitive in their function but at the same time possessing a specific emotional tone. The tone ascribed to the object is the same as the emotional tone of the schema; the sought-for relationship between the object and emotional facts, meanwhile, would consist in nothing other than the method of cognition described herein.

Translated by John Comber
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HENRYK ELZENBERG: NON-AESTHETIC AND AESTHETIC EXPRESSION

In the realm of aesthetics, the word *expression* is sometimes used in a sense that is so elastic and elusive that virtually all the phenomena associated with the field are ascribed to it. Thus having announced in the title a piece about expression, it would be well perhaps to begin with an assurance that it will show no trace of such pernicious abuse. Even when, in the second half, we discuss under the name 'expression' a group of at least three quite different phenomena, it still retains its physiognomy; the starting point for everything, meanwhile, will be a meaning that is wholly distinct and defined. One might well term it a 'proper' meaning, one in which our word passed from everyday speech into scholarly language, before experiencing further vicissitudes. Referring to a certain tradition, already established in part, for the time being I shall define expression 'in the proper sense' as follows: it is the actual or ostensible – for some observer – manifestation, through sensorially perceptible and thus physical objects (in this role of theirs, we call them 'symptoms' or 'manifestations'), of mental 'content' or 'objects' belonging to some being actually endowed with a psyche: for example, the manifesting of energy through a short, sharp command, or a child's cheerful mood through its laughing eyes, squealing, and leaping. Most commonly enumerated as manifested mental content – although, on higher levels of expression, personality in its entirety, even personality especially, comes into the reckoning – are experiences and dispositions; the word *manifesting*, together with the proviso with which we have furnished it, indicates that with the help of a 'symptom' an observer either in actual fact or at least in his subjective conviction cognizes something which without that help would have remained hidden from him; lastly, the mention of an actual psyche is intended to demarcate expression in the meaning under consideration from one of those related phenomena just alluded to, of which we will come to speak below.

A critical dissection would leave little flesh on this definition; it is simplified and requires a host of additions, corrections, and refinements; however, having

['Ekspresja pozaestetyczna i estetyczna', *Estetyka* 1 (1960): 49–65, reprinted in Henryk Elzenberg, *Pisma estetyczne* [Writings on aesthetics], ed. Lesław Hostyński (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 1999), 50–68. The original bibliographical references have been made to conform with the style and usage of *Estetika*.]

The present sketch, written in 1950, is thematically linked to an earlier work by the same author entitled 'Zabarwienie uczuciowe jako zjawisko estetyczne' [Emotional colouring as an aesthetic phenomenon], in *Prace ofiarowane Kazimierzowi Wójcickiemu* [Festschrift for Kazimierz Wójcicki] (Vilnius: Dom Książki Polskiej, 1937), 483–91 [reprinted in Elzenberg, *Pisma estetyczne*, 45–50, translated in this issue of *Estetika*]. A communiqué on the same subject was published as 'Le phénomène ésthetique de la coloration affective', in *Actes du deuxième congrés international d'esthétique et de science de l'art*, vol. 1 (Paris: Alcan, 1937), 221–25.

tailored it to the needs of the present sketch as a working definition, for now we will be able to employ it in that character quite harmlessly, and what follows will illuminate many things. One further terminological remark is perhaps worth adding, however: it would be well to understand by *expression* simply the process itself, the very fact of appearing; that property of the physical object through which content appears, meanwhile, should be called *expressivity*. This distinction cannot always be maintained, but it is well to keep it always in view.

Expressivity is commonly regarded as a noble aesthetic virtue; in most cases, to say 'how expressive that gesture is' or 'how full of expression that music is' constitutes great aesthetic praise. Despite this, on account of both the reservations, not infrequent here either, and also the occasionally emphasized fact that in such cases 'expressivity' is at times understood in a quite specific way, one cannot disregard the question as to whether every object that is expressive in the sense of our definition is aesthetically something valuable solely by dint of its being expressive. In a nutshell, is all expression, as expression, aesthetic? Of the two contemporary Polish aestheticians who have devoted specific studies to the question of expression, Ossowski, in the third chapter of his well-known book,[1] does not actually formulate the question at all; however, from his utterances and train of thought, one may conclude that he disregards the distinction between non-aesthetic and aesthetic expression and considers expression to be an aesthetic fact of itself, with no further conditions. The opposite stance – this time explicitly set out – is adopted by Wallis: only some expressive objects are aesthetic. As he puts it, 'A physical object that expresses a certain mental object is not […] thereby aesthetic (from an aesthetic point of view, the act of expressing is indifferent, non-aesthetic)'.[2] It would surely be difficult to deny – and this will be the starting point for our further considerations – that only the latter viewpoint is borne out by the facts. There are plenty of objects which according to our definition are expressive beyond the shadow of a doubt but which would not move an observer aesthetically merely through their expression, even if the observer were to adopt the most advantageous standpoint for aesthetic experience. Let us suppose that at an examination held in public I am present as someone from that public, a disinterested viewer, and so in conditions conducive to the adoption of an aesthetic stance. And at a certain point I notice that

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1 Stanisław Ossowski, *U podstaw estetyki* [The foundations of aesthetics], 2nd ed. (Warsaw: Czytelnik, 1948), 201–35.

2 Mieczysław Wallis-Walfisz, *Wyraz i życie psychiczne: O rozumieniu dzieł sztuki przedstawiających przedmioty psychiczne* [Expression and mental life: On the understanding of artworks representing mental objects] (Vilnius: Wileńskie Towarzystwo Filozoficzne, 1939), 9. Wallis's terminology is somewhat different to ours, but that is not manifest in this quotation and it does not render our views divergent.

a candidate's hands are trembling: given the situation, for me this will be an unquestionably expressive symptom, thanks to which I will become aware of the candidate's fear, yet aesthetically I experience nothing. Similarly, traces of tears on an open book tell us something about the emotion with which the book was being read; a crumpled, torn tissue thrown into the corner of a settee tells us about the anxiousness of the person who was using it; and an experienced graphologist will discover many of a person's mental traits by observing details of his handwriting. Yet in these instances as well there will be no aesthetic expression.[3] Simple examples may suffice to ascribe an indisputable reality to non-aesthetic expression; and I have completely ignored cases where the lack of aesthetic experience is determined solely by the adoption of an inappropriate attitude, for example, where a neurologist studies symptoms in his patient or a diplomat studies the face of his counterpart.

However, this assertion prompts another question: what then is the difference between non-aesthetic and aesthetic expression? Is it possible – to begin modestly with the negative conditions of aesthetic quality – to point to such a property of expressive objects in the case of which expressivity absolutely *cannot* be aesthetic? Let us look at the examples just given from this point of view: perhaps we will find in them a common feature which we might suppose to play that very role. Well, in contrast to other, *aesthetic*, cases that we will come across later, a common trait here is clearly the means by which a mental object manifests itself through a physical object. That means is *inference*; from the symptom, the observer *infers* that such and such content has occurred or will occur in such and such a being endowed with a psyche. So will this not be the trait in which we come to distinguish that factor which precludes aesthetic quality? Well, it would seem that we can indeed demonstrate that such is the case: in order to be aesthetic, expression *cannot* rely on inference. In so stating, however, we become embroiled in a dispute and a fundamental discussion, since we have contradicted, on a crucial point, not one but both of the authors referred to a moment ago, according to whom all expression – expression 'in the proper sense', of course, as discussed here – is invariably, and by its very nature, inferential.

In order to settle that discussion, let us pose the following question: with inferential expression, on what component of the phenomenon of expression in its entirety, as on its 'bearer', can aesthetic value appear? The question may be slightly artificial, but I think it will lead us to our goal. There appear to be three

[3] In a suitable situational context, some of these objects may become interesting in terms of drama, and thereby play a positive aesthetic role. Regardless of the context, the trembling of an actor's hands on stage may be positively appreciated for technical reasons, for example, simply as 'good work'. But those will be different varieties of aesthetic quality.

possibilities here. One we will eliminate at once, since it would involve the bearer of aesthetic value being the *act* of inference, the actual process. Ascribing certain aesthetic values to any processes occurring within the subject itself is by no means absurd; mention is justifiably made, for example, of dreaming or of the free play of the imagination, triggered by contact with a suitable object. Yet we would all agree that the bare process of inference is not in itself something aesthetic; so that possibility falls by the wayside.

According to the second, more serious, possibility – one which the aforementioned aestheticians also take into account, though not formulating their idea in quite the same way as we summarize it here – aesthetic value would be possessed by a revealed mental object: expression would open the way to different values – not always aesthetic no doubt, but at times (otherwise, what would all this have to do with aesthetics?) probably *also* aesthetic – contained in some psyche. Thus Beethoven's strong, expressive face or indeed his music would be aesthetic, since, among other things, through them one cognizes the extraordinary, and somehow simply *beautiful*, soul of the man. We would oppose this conception, but in order to do so we must return to basics.

For the time being, we will couch our idea in the following terms: if an object is 'aesthetically' expressive, and not expressive *tout court*, then the same applies in reverse: the same object is 'expressively' aesthetic, and not aesthetic *tout court*. Any contradictor could concur with this, and he might even express surprise that such a truism was being emphasized, since he might understand the matter in such a way that the object possesses *both* properties, is both aesthetic and expressive, or that at most it is aesthetic *because* it is expressive, dependent on the fact of expression in the very *fact* of its being aesthetic, just as this paper is blackened *because* someone has written on it. But that is not what we were getting at here. The true meaning of the sentence was as follows: 'expressively aesthetic' means 'aesthetic in *a certain way*'. Just as loftiness or tragedy or other modifications of aesthetic value exist, marked not just in their existence, but in their *distinctness*, by some particular conditions, different for each one, so there exists a peculiar aesthetic category of expressivity marked in its distinctness by the no less singular relationship in which the symptom and the manifested mental object stand towards one another. In light of this, however, it is obvious that any beauty of the mental content that is revealed in the expressive process is not an expressive beauty, since, together with the content itself, it is merely made manifest in that process, *cognized* as something that existed and was vested in that content already: no soul becomes beautiful by dint of being expressed in a look. Thus it is independent of the process, both in its existence and, *a fortiori*, in its distinctness: it is not the process that designates or 'constitutes' that beauty

in its distinctness. If there was no symptom and if we could come to know it by some other means, we would find it both undiminished and qualitatively the same. So it is not expressive beauty. And for that reason, revealed mental content cannot be considered at all as the bearer of that peculiar aesthetic quality which is given to us in the phenomenon of expression, and in that phenomenon alone.

It seems clear enough that it is of the nature of characteristically expressive aesthetic quality that its bearer is not a mental object but – modified through its manifesting function – the *symptom* itself. And so it is not the beauty of the artist's soul as revealed in his work, but the actual work under consideration, as revelatory of someone's soul; not a child's joyful mood, but his face that radiates that mood. And this is the only alternative that may be considered for inferential expression, as indeed for every kind of expression. But here that alternative does *not* occur, because if the expressivity of the symptom consists in the observer making inferences from it about another object, then the only role now played in the process of expression by the object that is the symptom is that of a *medium* for cognizing that other object; in itself, it arouses no interest. It becomes a 'symptom' in a sense that is far removed from the expressive sense, that is, roughly the one used by doctors – a symptom on the basis of which a diagnosis may be made. And in this purely informational role, it ceases to exist as an aesthetic object.

The upshot of this is that expression cannot be aesthetic through inference; an essential condition of its being aesthetic – a negative condition, as already indicated – would be its non-inferential character. Admittedly, certain reservations or explanations should be added to our thesis; but this is not yet the place to do so.

Now let us look for some positive conditions. The first, irrefutable perhaps, is that a manifested mental object must be given to the observer in a concrete representation – whatever that word might mean in relation to mental objects. Without such a concrete representation, the expression will remain non-aesthetic. Let us suppose that in perceiving a physical object we could simultaneously, without inference, find out – but *only* find out – that at that very moment that very person was experiencing just such an emotional state: in such conditions, this symptom would not be aesthetically expressive. More detailed justification is unnecessary, since agreement is assured in advance: after all, we commonly say in aesthetic instances that joy is 'written' on someone's face, anger in someone's eyes, or determination and energy in someone's movements.

Is general agreement assured also for the further assertion concerning how that representation is obtained? Judging by some utterances, one may well harbour doubts, although such agreement is easier perhaps to secure today than in the past. If expression is to be aesthetic, the representation of mental content cannot be obtained from the representation of a symptom in the way that was

once so extensively discussed – namely, through association. For example, when seeing a burning face and blood-injected eyes, we cannot by association obtain a representation of anger; when hearing a provocative song, we cannot thus obtain a representation of provocation, as a separate phenomenon, given to us somehow *beside* and *beyond* the symptoms. The situation is essentially the same as it was with inference, and it is enough to realize as much. An element obtained indirectly, if it is at all aesthetic, is certainly not expressively so; the original element (symptom) *is* expressive, but in its ancillary role as a basis for association it cannot become an aesthetic object, just as it could not become one in its role as a basis for inference. The quill with which *Childe Harold* was written, when seen in a museum, will not become beautiful by dint of evoking an image of the states of inspiration in which Byron wrote his work. The difference with expression through inference would lie solely in the fact that one cannot assert absolutely that the actual associative *process* was never something aesthetic. It would appear to be just that whenever associations flow *en masse*, in great richness, and indicate something like the creative inexhaustibility of the subject. However, an individual act of association is devoid of aesthetic significance.

We are now getting close to our first conclusion. Setting together our identical results in respect to inference and association, and realizing the essence of the reasoning advanced here, we may put forward the following statement, more far-reaching in its import: aesthetic expression cannot withstand any *passage* whatsoever, in any shape or form, from symptom to content. It will now suffice to replace that negative formula with its positive equivalent in order to obtain the second positive condition of aesthetic quality, and for the time being the last of those about which we intend to speak: an image of mental content must be given not *by the intermediary* of a symptom, but together with it, directly, such that image and symptom might be grasped together in a single act of perception. And not so much 'through' it, as we have come to hear from theorists and as we also expressed here at first, but rather 'in' it or 'on' it, in accordance with more everyday speech, as when we say that joy or sadness is written 'on' someone's face or 'in' a gesture. The word *through* – if not understood as 'by the intermediary of' – brings to mind cognitive 'transparency': the symptom would be like glass, and the content beyond it would be seen like clouds through a window or jelly-fish through the side of an aquarium. Whatever else might be said about this concept, it does not apply to aesthetic expression; as in inference, as in association, here too the symptom – precisely because of its transparency – would play an ancillary role, and the aesthetic value of a phenomenon would not appear upon it. But since we are dealing with comparisons, and wish by comparison to depict the essential state of affairs, it should be said that mental content must be given in

the symptom – or on it – more or less like moisture in a sponge, a scent in the air, sheen on snow, or poetry in a sonnet, or, perhaps more bluntly, like wetness in water or greenness on a leaf. These slightly shaky images are not intended to illustrate the structures of an assumed whole, consisting of the symptom and the content, but only the actual way in which the content is made manifest. This content, to put it slightly less vividly, must be simply *read* by the observer from the symptom. Or to put it completely drily: the observer must *find* it on the symptom. In short, this may be called the *immanence* of the mental object in the symptom: we will say that only those symptoms in which this object is given immanently are aesthetically expressive.[4]

Here, however, a rather worrying question arises. We said at the beginning, when defining expression, that experiences and dispositions are commonly regarded as being revealed mental content. Well, if that were indeed the case, be it for aesthetic expression or non-aesthetic expression, then how could someone's experiences or dispositions be 'directly' perceived or 'found' in a physical object? By their very nature, dispositions can *only* be inferred. An experience, meanwhile, so it would seem, can only be either inferred or else cognized in such a way that the observer repeats it more or less realistically in his own experience (the German technical term for this is *nacherleben*). Yet this repetition is something different and mentally 'bulkier' – if one may put it like that – than everything we are discussing here. It is meaningless to say, however, that a person's joy – his real feeling, which he actually experiences – is perceived by someone 'on' his face or that another person's sadness is perceived 'in' his movements and gait.

But that is just where we were heading. Here is our next thesis, perhaps the most important of the corrections referred to at the beginning as being essential to our simplified initial definition: real experiences and dispositions, belonging to

[4] This is perhaps the right place to formulate the reservations signalled above in connection with the assertion that expression, in order to be aesthetic, must be non-inferential. Now, after discussing the two forms of passage from symptom to content, we can apply the intended remarks also to association and extend them to the advanced thesis as a whole. That thesis states only that expression, if it is to be aesthetic, cannot *consist in* inference or association; that is, neither the one nor the other takes place in the actual process of the experiencing of a given object as an expressive symptom. It does not assert, however, that association or inference cannot lie at the root of that process, that is, in some other process which would create for the former a situation from which to proceed and *constitute* the object as expressive. That is because the way mental content is given *now* is different to how it was linked to the given symptom *originally*, in the prehistory of the experience; now it must be 'found' and 'read', but it could have been linked in various ways. Through inference, I can make an initial discovery, as it were, that this particular person is a melancholic; if that discovery in some way contributes to my later direct reading of that melancholy in someone's face and gestures, then this latter experience will not be doomed to being non-aesthetic solely on account of that relationship. And the same applies to association.

some psyche, manifest themselves in general only in non-aesthetic expression. They do not manifest themselves in aesthetic expression, and that constitutes such a profound and fundamental difference between one and the other that it all but precludes any formula that might be applicable with tolerable aptness to both.

So if not real experiences, then what is that mental content linked to aesthetic expression? Let us clearly admit one thing straight away: for that revealed content which appears to play a fundamental role, the term 'mental' sounds too assertive; perhaps some irresolute, non-committal term would be suitable, like 'psychoid' (if we could agree at all to introduce such a bold term). Of fundamental importance here are certain *qualities*, which in extra-aesthetic life we do indeed observe primarily in states of mind, dispositions, moods, feelings, and emotional attitudes, but which must not be confused with those states, feelings, or moods, or with anything of that kind. So this will be, for example, not joy that is actually experienced, but a characteristic quality, be it of joy or of the subject experiencing joy – and so joyfulness; not anger, but angriness; not woe, but sadness. And these will continue to be qualities less unilaterally assigned to some specific experience, and yet specific in their content, such as aggressiveness, gentleness, gloominess, bumptiousness, or haughtiness – all of which can also designate dispositions, though they appear here in a different meaning. But these qualities, and many others for which there are no names or terms, are not essentially properties of mental objects alone; they can also (as the same qualities! – that is the gist and the paradox of the whole theory) appear on sensory objects. It is not just a state of mind and the person experiencing it that can be 'gloomy' – or 'joyful' or 'sad' – in the sense of just such a quality, but equally as well a landscape, a melody, a set of colours, or an arrangement of light and shade.[5] For such qualities, it is perfectly natural that they are given 'directly' or 'immanently' on symptoms. What is more, in contrast to other content, to which we will refer in a moment, they are thus not just given, but they are on the symptoms precisely and literally, like that 'wetness in water' or 'greenness on a leaf'. As qualities, they are *features* of those symptoms; the symptoms are their phenomenal substrate. As we know, there are a great many properties indifferent to the substrate and transferable from the mental to the physical and vice versa – quantitative, dynamic, temporal qualities; and the paradox lies elsewhere. What causes difficulty here is rather the notion of a quality that is not entirely indifferent to the substrate but is somehow more intimately

[5] This concept, quite widely accepted today, derives partly from Oswald Külpe, *Grundlagen der Ästhetik*, ed. Siegfried Behn (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1921), 101–2, but mainly from a number of mentions made on various occasions by Max Scheler, who was followed, among Polish aestheticians, by Roman Ingarden. One interesting exposition displaying a similar tendency is Rudolf Arnheim's short article 'The Priority of Expression', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 8 (1949), 106–9.

linked to the mental sphere and yet would manifest itself as such on physical objects. Hence common sense adopts a defensive attitude towards this concept. We would willingly attempt to explain it here in more detail; unfortunately, all such attempts would be hypothetical and would also lead us into the heart of difficult and contentious problems, which could only blow our limited discussion apart. Unfavourable prejudice may be diminished by the remark that – as often in aesthetics – the whole thesis concerns not things but phenomena or even mere appearances; in a landscape, for example, it concerns not rocks as blocks or a forest as a collection of pines or spruces, but their visual image. To say nothing of when a quality's substrate is a set of colours or musical tones! As for questions that are commonly regarded as ultimately trans-subjective, nothing is pronounced here at all. But should anyone wish to counter even such a cautiously interpreted statement with pure negation, a further response could only be that, however we wish to explain it, the presence of those qualities on expressive symptoms is a *fact*, and that fact cannot be denied, even if one does not really know how to include it in the schemata of ordinary practical thinking. It is good method rather to allow it a transforming effect on those schemata. It would not be the first time that data from an aesthetic experiment provided fertile suggestions for our whole cognition.

Thus beyond all reservations – now dispelled with regard to this adjective – the first 'mental' object given directly in the symptom consists of those slightly mysterious 'qualities'. However, for expression 'in the proper sense' – which we have been discussing all along – this is not the only object of that kind. After all, a peculiarity of such expression was supposed to be the manifestation of mental content belonging to some actual psyche; yet no gloominess read from a landscape or joyfulness read from a face belongs to any actual psyche as a pure quality. Something else must be found. So will we be obliged after all to return – by a circuitous route – to experiences and dispositions? That depends: in some sense no; in some sense yes. No, if all the words of the formula are taken in their strong, literal meaning. But just as we used the term *mental* in a figurative and weaker sense for qualities, so 'belonging' and 'manifesting' should be taken in a similar sense (after all, we said that the definition from which that formula is taken would not withstand strict dissection). And then it will turn out that both experiences and dispositions can somehow be given in the symptom. Besides a certain loosening of notions, however, this entire exposition will also considerably expand the subject.

That is to say, expression 'in the proper sense' is, as we saw at the beginning, just one of several phenomena of expression as 'broadly' understood; we should now add that aesthetic expression is as equally subject to a differentiation of these two meanings, the narrow and the broad, as is non-aesthetic expression. So

besides aesthetic expression in the proper sense, which we have been dealing with exclusively up to now, there also exist other aesthetic varieties. In light of this, however, in order to discuss it more closely and to bring out its distinctness, we would have to incorporate it into the whole and compare it with the other varieties. Particularly since – and this is the third of the positive theses we will advance here – expression in the proper sense is not, as is commonly held, the simplest, basic variety in this series. On the contrary, it is both a complex and a secondary phenomenon – even the furthest removed from the primary phenomenon. So we must also briefly draw those varieties into our considerations.

The simplest, in spite of everything, is the one which aestheticians of certain fields do not wish to acknowledge at all – the one which we have actually already described: when a quality is simply observed on a physical object and when that fact is not modified or enhanced by any further related processes. As, for example, when one simply perceives and senses the 'bleakness' of a highland landscape, already mentioned a couple of times here, or – as in Arnheim's example – the 'spry aggressiveness' of a flame or the 'wistfulness' of a musical phrase. Given that, of all mental content, these qualities have most to do with feeling, that in mental reality it is feelings which are often their most noticeable substrate, and also that they invariably seem to find at least a semi-emotional equivalent in the observer, this variety may be termed the 'emotional colouring' of some physical objects. Remembering, however, that sometimes – as with 'aggressiveness' – the substrate does not consist of a feeling or just of a feeling, we might content ourselves with the less distinct expression 'mental colouring'. In the field of expression, this is a relatively modest phenomenon, but aesthetically perhaps the purest. It also typically represents a crucial aspect of aesthetic experience in general: its qualitative attitude to the world and its calm indifference to the question of substance existing or not existing beyond qualities.

Yet seldom do we halt at the stage of pure emotional colouring. Not just for the theorist, but also for the person aesthetically experiencing a symptom, it is not the easiest thing to acknowledge that the features which he has usually treated as mental are showing themselves to him in isolation, with no psyche-endowed being of which they would be features. Effort is often required even to sense the sea as 'angry' whilst continuing to treat it as a mass of water stirred into violent motion. A suitably experienced observer can manage this; otherwise, the object itself – for example, a sufficiently abstract arrangement of musical notes – is by its nature particularly resistant to distorting interpretations. In principle, however, once a mental quality has appeared on an object, it insistently demands that some psyche – one in which it can 'settle' – should be produced, composed,

or dreamt up for it. And in a huge number of cases this process does indeed occur: before the observer knows it, the qualities have already drawn that psyche with them automatically, as it were, deep into the object. What follows, in *one* of the possible ways, is what we this time denote by the term *animization* [*animizacja*]: the attribution of a psyche to things not endowed with one.[6] Of course, that psyche is not neutral, indeterminate; the object receives those experiences and dispositions which correspond to the quality observed: a sea grows angry and has a capacity for anger, and a weeping willow is sad. This all occurs not through actual judgements, but through suppositions, provisionally, only for the duration of the experience; it is not animization in earnest, with *conviction*. Animization in earnest is mythological animization; aesthetic animization is the acceptance of something, for some time, which one does not actually believe. And irrespective of exactly how spontaneous the preparatory process of the 'production' of that mental content may be, as soon as it is completed and the object is seen to possess that mental content, is 'endowed with a psyche', animization (contrary to the doubts which might be raised here)[7] becomes something aesthetic and

[6] [See note 1 of 'Emotional Colouring as an Aesthetic Phenomenon' in this issue of *Estetika*.]

[7] The most important doubt is the following. Both in the phenomenon taken as a whole (the fact that mental qualities induce us to ascribe to the object some psyche or other) and in each individual shaping of that phenomenon (the endowing of that psyche with dispositions corresponding to particular qualities perceived on the object), one can discern the process if not of inference in the literal sense (since we are dealing here not with judgements but with suppositions) then at least of something very similar to inference. Only as a result of this process – someone advancing this doubt would say – do we arrive at that further mental content, beyond the qualities. So this content is not given to the observer directly in the symptom; here, as in the instances we discussed at the beginning, the symptom is again just a starting point, though this time on account not of its physical features but of the mental qualities that, after all, are also features of it; thus it is again relegated to the role of a medium, and from that role it does not receive an aesthetic character. Of course, it does not lose the aesthetic quality which, by dint of its colouring, it had from the start, but it does not gain anything through animization; it is not aesthetically enriched in any way. Animization is an epilogue that aesthetically brings nothing.

But here it would be fitting to invoke what we emphasized earlier: association and inference cannot *constitute* expression, if it is supposed to be aesthetic, but they are conceivable perfectly well at its foundation, as a preparatory process. And that is the case here. The realization of this fact is hindered by a certain classic ambiguity that lies in the very word *animization*, which means both the action of animizing and its result, that is, the supposed possession by an object of its own psyche (in German, this would be differentiated as *Beseelen* and *Beseeltsein*). The question of aesthetic quality looks different with each of these meanings. The action, that act of endowing an object with a psyche and dispositions, *if* it takes place through inference (in our opinion, that is not always the case, but let us not complicate the discussion!), is by the same stroke non-aesthetic. But then that is merely an initial process, through which an aesthetic object is *constituted*! Once an object has been endowed with a psyche and is beheld as such, once the psyche has entered it and radiates from it, as it were, then that is immanence

constitutes the second variety of aesthetic expression, after colouring. Thus in this second variety, as the next mental content after the qualities, the symptom's fictitious, qualitatively defined, psyche, produced by imagination for the qualities previously perceived, appears within that symptom.

So much for animization, the ordinary sort, which everyone recognizes. A somewhat more difficult analysis awaits us in the third variety of aesthetic expression, our ostensibly elementary 'expression in the proper sense'.

In ordinary animization, the psyche ascribed to the object is entirely, unequivocally fictitious: we 'ascribe' it, yet we know that it does not exist either in the object or anywhere in the world. That is how we animize mountains and rivers, wind and the night, trees and flowers, sunlight playing on waves, and even accidental stains on a wall. Yet we can animize not just 'dead objects' and not just 'objects of nature'. We can also animize objects linked in one way or another with an actual psyche, which we know to possess such a connection. And so, on the one hand, products: we animize furniture, buildings, and churches. (Who has not encountered in literature the animization of Gothic cathedrals, at times so poetically magnificent?) On the other hand, the parts of the human body: when we look at a human hand as something aesthetically expressive, it is not true – though one often thinks it is – that through it we reach the experiences or dispositions of its owner. We are *animizing* it just like a sea, rock, or tree, endowing that hand *itself* with the imaginary psyche, and we are making of it, as of a tree or rock, a kind of living, independent being. We may be utterly indifferent to the link with the owner's psyche, yet that simple state of affairs is uncommon; in these examples, it is favoured by circumstances that are not encountered everywhere. A hand, as we know, is perceived as something particularly distinct, self-contained; when beholding a cathedral, a work so often anonymous and always collective, it is easier than when listening to poetry or music to forget that some actual mental life has impressed its mark upon it. The situation becomes confused when the link between the object beheld and that actual mental life is either brought

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and the object is aesthetic. From the observer's point of view, a sea's 'soul' and its tendency 'to grow angry' are given no less directly than the original feature of angriness. From the point of view of the *structure* of the aesthetic symptom, there is obviously a difference, since the psyche and dispositions are not *features* of the symptom; the link between the content and the symptom is somehow different. For the time being, however, we may pass over that question of structure, which only gains importance when the problem arises of the aesthetic *satisfaction* that is peculiar to the phenomena of expression.

Since we are dealing with ambiguity in the word *animization*, let us add that the same ambiguity lies in the words *to become manifest* and *manifesting*. They relate both to the fact of cognition or the first discovery of mental content and also to the beholding or 'contemplating' of mental content that is already cognized and discovered. Only the latter is aesthetic.

into relief by the observer himself in his awareness or – and to simplify the exposition we will discuss only this instance – when it is objectively so close and suggests itself so irresistibly that one *cannot* forget about it. For example, when it is a person's body taken as a whole, in action and motion, or – an extreme example – a person's face. Or when it is a work of creation which in its overall structure and in all its properties is clearly dependent on the psyche of its maker – a dependence that is particularly marked, like a stormy work of Romantic music, suffused with emotion.[8] The state of affairs familiar to us from animization remains unaltered here inasmuch as – so long as the experience is aesthetic – we continue to ascribe a psyche to the expressive object itself. From a face, as from a hand, with aesthetic expression we do not infer anything about the psyche of its owner, and if we animize music at all, not satisfied with merely reading qualities from it, then neither from music do we infer who is performing it or who created it, but we do animizie, or ascribe a psyche to, the face itself, the music itself. It is not Beethoven whom we now see as tormented, focused, forbidding, or tragic, just Beethoven's face; nor is it Beethoven who at a given moment relinquishes his internal struggles and falls into an ecstasy of joy, rather – as long as the experience has not developed further – it is the Ninth Symphony, the content-laden sound mass. Here, however, a difference arises, since, because of the obvious dependency, somehow that actual psyche appears on the stage. In animization, what was held up in opposition to the fantasy of the alleged psyche of sea or rock – as actual knowledge, constantly present in the background of experience – was the awareness that there was no such psyche in the object nor was an actual psyche in any way linked to it. Here, however, we counter that fantasy with the knowledge that there *exists* some psyche linked to the object, which either shapes it or stands in correlation with it, but actually exists outside it and belongs not to the object but to some living, or formerly living, human being. Yet our reactions to this knowledge are wholly irrational: of its two equal components, we acknowledge only the first, the *existence* of an actual psyche and its links with the object, whereas we exclude from our awareness, remove, and overlook the second component – namely, that that psyche is *outside* the object. That is hardly surprising. If we did not do this, we would have before us two different psyches and two mental lives linked with the same object: the object's own fictitious psyche and an actual psyche in correlation with the object. An aesthetic attitude cannot withstand such a split, since it always harbours the opposite tendency, that is, to perceive an object, as far as is possible, as a unified whole. And by means not so much of supposition as perhaps actual delusion – although the irrationality

[8] I do not give an example from poetry, since in poetry the matter is much more complex; the present analysis cannot be applied to it automatically.

of the phenomenon renders this point oddly unclear – we now somehow *identify* the psyche that we ascribed by way of animization to the object with the psyche of the actual human being with which the object maintains a factual link; we lose the sense of difference so thoroughly that we no longer have two psyches, the fictitious and the real, within our field of vision, but only one, which belongs to both the object and the person. It soon turns out, however, that this is not identification on equal terms: the real human psyche is stronger than the fictitious, flimsy, mental life of the object, and consequently has a tendency to *oust* it from awareness. And ultimately what was identification can even become the *substitution* of the human psyche for the psyche of the symptom: now, it is no longer the actual symphony that rejoices or breaks down, but that person within it, embodied in it, as it were, who thus shaped it. And the same applies in other cases: it is not *through* the symptom, but in the symptom itself, as its content, that the person manifests himself. This person may be someone in particular and familiar to us, like when I look at a bust of Voltaire and think it is indeed Voltaire. But that is neither essential nor the most frequent case. It may also be someone specific but unfamiliar, as when I notice some face in passing and am struck by its gravity, concentration, and philosophical reflection. And, lastly, it may also be *some* person, *some* people, *some* group or other, rather than a particular individual and so forth; such is often the case when we experience a musical work expressively in the proper sense. In the last two cases, the question 'who?' is not posed at all. Therefore, the censuring of such an attitude to works of art as supposedly 'anecdotal', excessively focused on authorial biography, and so on is wholly inappropriate. If the theory is understood correctly, such accusations miss their target entirely.

However, despite the last remark, here too, as with animization, it remains pertinent to ask to what extent the whole phenomenon is truly aesthetic. Of course, it differs from the cases we cited at the beginning (the trembling hands; the handwriting and the graphologist) and that is the difference we have been concerned with throughout our analysis. There, we concluded schematically 'such is the symptom, such is the man'. Here, the situation is completely different: after animization has been effected, the image of the real person appears not by inference, but by the wholly irrational process of blurring the boundaries between the mental life we ourselves placed in the object and that with which it is objectively linked. The observer's attendant conviction that he is *cognizing* the psyche of that person does not in itself provide anything aesthetically important, whether it is well founded or not, but neither does it disturb the aesthetic nature of the experience as a whole: it is neutral, harmless. That aesthetic nature could only be disturbed if we were to begin to wonder, having sharply separated the

real psyche from the fictitious one, if we have really cognized, if there is not some error in all this, if the real Beethoven was indeed so tragic and the real Voltaire so malicious, before setting about comparing what we read from the symptom with what we know about those people from history. In experience, of course, sliding into this non-aesthetic standpoint happens every day, but the borderline does not seem difficult to stretch in notional terms.

And that is just how expression in the proper sense, in its aesthetic variety, would look. Or, perhaps more in keeping with the actual state of affairs, that is what that expression, in order to be aesthetic, must transform itself into. As we can see, this variety fits quite well in the definition we gave at the beginning of our outline; but we came to place under that definition conceptual content quite different from where it is applied to non-aesthetic expression. That whole aesthetic variety of ours turned out to be an expanded form of animization: after the first normal phase, a real psyche is drawn into the orbit of the phenomenon, and is, to a greater or lesser extent, substituted for the original fictitious psyche; this is still animization, but involving a real, not a fictitious, psyche.

Here ends our fragment of theory. But it has not covered the whole question. The immanence of the mental content in what we have called the symptom was presented as a condition of expression's being aesthetic, but only as a *necessary* condition. We may reasonably assume that it is also sufficient for a certain minimum of its aesthetic quality. By no means, however, did we wish to state that it suffices for achieving higher levels of that aesthetic quality. Thus with regard to the essentially aesthetic questions connected with expression, this outline is no more than an introduction. Subsequent stages would concern a topic that could not be considered here, namely, the character, components, and varieties of the peculiarly aesthetic satisfaction which an expressive object can give.

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