Individualism and the Aesthetic

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
BY

Hyun Joo Shin

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Joseph Owens, Geoffrey Hellman

April 2012

Abstract

The goal of this dissertation is to have a better understanding of three aesthetic theories that I take to be central in western aesthetics since the modern period, i.e., aesthetic formalism, the theory of aesthetic supervenience, and modern aesthetics, by examining them with a perspective that I derive from the debate between externalism and individualism in the philosophy of mind. I argue that the three aesthetic theories under examination can be seen, firstly, as centrally concerned with psychological issues, and secondly, as particularly committed to psychological individualism. And since individualism as a picture of the mind has already been shown to be the basis of the major theories of mind, knowledge, and meaning, starting from Cartesianism to theories of quite recent years, we can say that these aesthetic theories were also shaped by the philosophical current in which psychological individualism was deeply ingrained and powerfully operative. This also reveals that these aesthetic theories are in conflict with psychological externalism which has been widely acknowledged to do justice to ways in which we characterize the content of a mental state. This conflict leads me to question why psychological individualism has been consistently used in these aesthetic theories without being noticed or critically discussed. To be precise, there is an individualistic assumption which is shared by aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience and is developed from modern aesthetics, and the fact that this assumption has not been noticed by others suggests to me that there is something intuitive in the assumption. With this point in mind, I explore what intuition is behind the assumption and show that the intuition playing a crucial role in the Cartesian skeptical thought experiment and also in the standard theories of perception is essential to these aesthetic theories.

Table of Contents

Introduction

This dissertation will examine three aesthetic theories that I take to be central in western aesthetics since the modern period. I will examine these theories through a lens provided by the debate between individualism and externalism in the philosophy of mind. The three aesthetic theories under examination are aesthetic formalism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the theory of aesthetic supervenience in the latter half of the 20th century, and modern aesthetics in the 17th and 18th centuries. These aesthetic theories have already been critically discussed and assessed by many authors for their significant status in western aesthetics: modern aesthetics advanced by philosophers such as Hume and Kant set the key issues in western aesthetics for subsequent generations; aesthetic formalism was one of the most influential and culturally dominant theories in art criticism; the theory of aesthetic supervenience generated a long and heated discussion among analytic philosophers, lasting for more than thirty years. The characteristics of each of these three theories – their significances, advantages, flaws and the like – may seem to have been sufficiently discussed already. However, I think that the debate between externalists and individualists in the philosophy of mind provides us with a new perspective that illuminates the natures of and connections between these theories.

This debate started when the externalist picture of the mental was advanced by Burge (1979, 1981), McGinn (1977) and Stich (1978).[1] This picture of the mental was the result of the recognition that externalist intuitions applied to the matter of reference (Kripke 1980) and meaning (Putman 1975) can also be extended to the matter of mental phenomena.[2] And it is with the emergence of the externalist picture of the mental that the opposition between it and the major theories of the mental prior to it (e.g., the traditional Cartesianism, Berkeleyan or Leibnizian idealism, or more recent materialist reductionism,

[1] Burge, T. (1979) "Individualism and the Mental", *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* IV, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 73-121.
_____ (1982) "Other Bodies", in A. Woodfield (ed.), *Thought and Object: Essays on Intentionality*, New York: Oxford, pp. 97-120.
McGinn, C. (1977) "Charity Interpretation and Belief", *Journal of Philosophy* 74, pp. 521-535.
Stich, S. (1978) "Autonomous Psychology and the Belief-desire Thesis", *The Monist* 61, pp. 573-591.
[2] Kripke, S. (1980) *Naming and Necessity*, Oxford: Blackwell.
Putnam, H. (1975) "The Meaning of 'Meaning'", *Philosophical Papers II: Mind, Language, and Reality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

behaviorism, functionalism, etc.) came to be noticed. Consequently, the opposition gave rise to the realization that those theories are all based on a particular picture of the mental which is in conflict with externalism, i.e., individualism.

Individualism as a picture of the mental advances the view that an individual's mental state is individuated or determined independently of the nature of the individual's physical or social environment. According to Burge's characterization, individualists hold that "the mental natures of an individual's mental states and events are such that there is no necessary or other deep individuative relation between the individual's being in states, or undergoing events, with those natures, and the nature of the individual's physical and social environment."[3] The externalist picture of the mental rejects this view, claiming that an individual's mental state is individuated or determined in part by the nature of the social or physical environment in which the individual is embedded.

In order to support this, Burge makes use of a thought experiment in which two particle for particle identical individuals are staged in two different environments. The goal of his thought experiment is to show that the two duplicate individuals – duplicates in the sense that they have every non-intentionally describable fact about them identical, such as their brain states, sensory inputs, internal qualitative experiences, dispositions to behave, functional states and so on – can have different mental states due to their being situated in different social or physical environments. With this conclusion of the thought experiment, Burge refutes individualism, the traditionally dominant picture of the mental, that an individual's mental state is determined to be what it is purely in terms of intrinsic characteristics of the individual, considered as an "isolated physical organism, causal mechanism, or seat of consciousness."[4] This debate between individualism and externalism in the philosophy of mind is still ongoing. However, there is considerable agreement among philosophers that the externalist picture does justice to ways we ordinarily characterize or individuate mental states.

I believe that this debate recently taken place in philosophical discussions of mental phenomena can be insightfully employed in examining the three sorts of aesthetic theories that I take to be the main constituents of western aesthetics since the modern era.

---

[3] Burge, "Cartesian Error and the Objective of Perception", in J. McDowell and P. Pettit (eds.), *Subject, Thought, and Context*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 118-119.
[4] Burge, "Individualism and the Mental", p. 79.

My project can thus be seen as a reflective reconstruction of those aesthetic theories in question with a psychological perspective in mind. That is to say, I will show that the main issues in these aesthetic theories are essentially psychological in character, and in fact one of the most distinctive characteristics of western aesthetics during modern and contemporary times is its strong psychological flavor.

In fact, the psychological vein in modern aesthetics (the aesthetic theories of modern philosophers such as Hume and Kant) has already been noticed by other authors. This is not surprising due to the obvious discussion in modern aesthetics about the individual's state of mind in aesthetic appreciation. However, I observe that the following point has not been noticed yet: two major subsequent aesthetic theories developed the psychological tendency of modern aesthetics into a particular individualistic assumption concerning mental contents. To be more precise, the most influential and widely-discussed theories respectively in art criticism and analytic aesthetics, that is, aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience, can be seen as committed to a version of psychological individualism sharing the same individualistic assumption concerning mental contents.

The individualistic picture of the mental came to be recognized as such only with the appearance of the externalist picture and the resulting contrast between them, and this explains why the above point has not been discussed yet. Simply put, the perspective derived from the debate, which I plan to apply to the aesthetic theories in question, was not available before the emergence of externalism in the philosophy of mind. And I believe that the perspective in question will bring to light some important characteristics of the three groups of aesthetic theories, which will help us have a better understanding of western aesthetics since the modern period. In particular, this approach will make it more obvious how modern and contemporary thinkers are distinguished from the ancients and medievals, in virtue of their shift of focus to psychological issues. It will also show that their philosophical goals or manners of solution are not idiosyncratic of aesthetics only, but can be understood as in line with those in other areas of philosophy, by pointing out that the tendency to look into what occurs to an individual's inner state in most theories of mind, knowledge, or meaning, starting with Cartesianism until the tendency declines in the late 20th century, is also found in the aesthetics of the same periods.

The psychological turn in aesthetics as it enters the modern period may not be easy to grasp unless we have some general background understanding of the aesthetics of the previous periods. Thus let us have a brief look at some key features of ancient and medieval aesthetics. My presentation is not an attempt to represent every aesthetic theory or view in antiquity and the Middle Ages; there were considerable variants, oppositions or debates during those periods, and it is not difficult to find cases in which particular remarks and observations made by a philosopher are not even in line with his overall theoretical view on beauty or art. This tendency was particularly striking in medieval aesthetics, and for this reason Tatarkiewicz distinguishes two kinds of aesthetic propositions, namely, "assumptions" and "insights". "Assumptions" are general, essential propositions of aesthetics in accordance with the outlook of the time, constituting the permanent, uniform part of the aesthetics of the time. "Insights", on the other hand, are those empirical observations peculiar to individual thinkers, which accordingly vary from one individual to another.[5] What he observes is that throughout the thousand years of ancient aesthetics, its basic assumptions remained stable and uniform, and they were taken over by the medievals as well to be preserved and even strengthened. In a word, there were basic aesthetic propositions shared by the ancients and the medievals alike, despite occasional variants, developments, oppositions and so on. I will focus on these shared elements in the following.

There are roughly four measures of beauty, according to Tatarkiewicz, in ancient aesthetics, and since the medieval thinkers inherited them, I will just present these four ways of looking at beauty as characteristic of both ancient and medieval aesthetics.

> The Sophists' measure resided in subjective aesthetic experience, in the degree of pleasure it contained. For the Pythagoreans the measure was objective regularity and harmony. Socrates saw the measure of beauty in the degree to which it was attuned to the task it was meant to perform. Now Plato came forward with a fourth measure: the perfect Idea of Beauty which we have in our mind and against which we measure the beauty of things.[6]

[5] Tatarkiewicz, W. (1970-1974) *History of Aesthetics* Book 2, eds. and trans. by J. Harrell, C. Barrett and D. Petsch, The Hague: Mouton, p. 286.
[6] Ibid., Book1, pp. 118-119.

The Sophists claim that the beautiful is what gives pleasure in our experiencing the object. We can say that the common relativistic attitude many people tend to have in modern times, "Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder", is exactly in line with the Sophists' notion. At first glance, it seems that the Sophists' notion of beauty is psychological to the same extent and in the same way as are the theories of modern and contemporary times. The reason for this is that a substantial amount of discussions about "aesthetic experience" and "pleasure" in connection with beauty is one of the distinct psychological features of modern aesthetics. However, there is a significant difference between the Sophists' notion of beauty and the moderns' discussion of beauty in terms of pleasure. For the Sophists, aesthetic judgments of a certain object are likely to differ from one individual to another, for what is pleasing to one person's temperament, sense, or preference may not please those of another person. On the contrary, most modern philosophers attempted to show that aesthetic judgments can be objective and universal. Thus, despite their seeming common tendency to talk about "pleasure" and "aesthetic experience", it is only the moderns who dealt with the question of exactly what psychological aspects of our feelings of pleasure are relevant to the objectivity of aesthetic judgments; that is to say, their focus of investigation was on the psychological nature of aesthetic experiences or pleasures. The Sophists' interest in "pleasure" and "aesthetic experience" does not lead them to consider this sort of characteristic; those notions are merely used to support their argument that what is beautiful is simply what each individual finds "pleasing" in their "aesthetic experiences", and there is no further investigation concerning the relevant psychological characteristics of them.

Turning to the Pythagoreans, it is easier to see that their notion of beauty is not psychological in character. They believed that the world is constructed mathematically in the sense that everything in the universe is modeled after number. Thus their notion of beauty was also closely related to their mathematical worldview. According to them, beauty is equivalent to harmony and symmetry, while the latter is in turn determined in a mathematical way in terms of number, measure, and proportion. Since beauty is objectively determined in this mathematical way, it is an *objective property* of things.[7] The Pythagorean influence can be easily found throughout antiquity and the Middle

[7] Ibid., pp. 80-81.

Ages; in these periods many thinkers were interested in mathematical or metaphysical aesthetics, trying to figure out what makes the perfect harmony or symmetry of parts. In a word, this tradition centered on a metaphysical question concerning the objective property of things.

The third notion of beauty was originally advanced by Socrates. His idea is that a thing is beautiful when it is adapted to such things as its purpose, nature, time and conditions; in a word, a thing is beautiful when it is *suitable*.[8] We can consider this view functionalist in that it claims that each beautiful thing is beautiful in virtue of being suited for its purpose, nature, time and conditions. Socrates says, "Even a golden shield is ugly and a rubbish bin is beautiful if the former is badly and the latter well fitted to its purpose", "For all things are good and beautiful in relation to those purposes for which they are well adapted, bad and ugly in relation to those for which they are ill adapted".[9] In these words, Socrates seems to be equating beauty with goodness, and this view is in fact commonly observed throughout ancient and medieval aesthetics. In sum, this way of explaining beauty is not psychological in character; as a property of a thing, beauty is argued to be determined by assessing how good an object is in fulfilling its purpose.

The fourth notion of beauty, introduced by Plato, is idealistic, spiritualistic and moralistic in character. His notion of beauty is broader than the modern notion of perceptually aesthetic beauty, and this was not an original invention by Plato himself but a view already widespread before Plato and also throughout ancient and medieval times. This notion of beauty applies not only to perceptually beautiful objects but also excellences in human characters, virtues, political systems, laws, truths and so on; beauty includes everything that causes admiration, appreciation and enjoyment, not just those things which are pleasing to the ear and eye. Clearly, Plato's notion is different from those of the Sophists and Socrates. First of all, Plato objects to Socrates by pointing out that some things are beautiful in themselves and we value them as they are, without taking into account their suitability for a certain purpose. In a word, Plato is against the functionalistic notion of beauty. Plato's notion also challenges the relativistic notion of the Sophists. The Sophists confine beauty only to beautiful things for eyes and ears, and

[8] Ibid., pp. 100-104.
[9] Ibid., p 103.

thus what each individual finds beautiful is likely to differ from one individual to another, due to their having different personal preferences. For Plato, however, beauty is an objective property, a property inherent in beautiful things, existing independently of an individual's subjective liking or reaction to it.[10]

What may look psychological in character in Plato's aesthetics is his discussion of the "inborn sense of beauty" which is what we come to remember with the help of our love for beautiful things. We are firstly led by our love for beautiful physical bodies to be aware of a higher, superior degrees of beauty found in good political system, laws, knowledge, and ultimately to remember by the inborn sense of beauty, the Idea of beauty. This seems to me more of a spiritual characteristic rather than a psychological one. Plato talks about how our soul is led by beautiful things of varying significances to the ultimate, absolute, unchanging Idea of beauty, but nowhere does he describe the journey in psychological terms, i.e., there is no detailed discussion from a psychological perspective, concerning what occurs in the individual's mind or how the individual's internal faculties work and the like. In sum, Plato's aesthetics is not psychological in character just as the above three concepts of beauty are not. According to these four concepts of beauty, what makes something beautiful has little to do with an individual's psychology.

Some may still find that psychological issues or approaches are not the exclusive feature of the aesthetics of modern and contemporary times. In support of this, they may point out Aristotle's discussion of the purging of emotions, so-called *catharsis,* in our enjoyment of tragedy, and other discussions similar to this. Aristotle says that in enjoying tragedy the proper purgation of pity and fear takes place. Many interpret this as meaning that "the spectator rids himself of the excess of those emotions which trouble him and gains internal peace".[11] It is true that Aristotle focused on spelling out what psychological effects tragedy can have on us, but this is notably different from the psychological approach in the aesthetics of the modern period and beyond. The moderns as well as more contemporary philosophers attempted not only to spell out psychological effects a work of art has on our soul, mind, or emotion and the like, but also to establish the

[10] Ibid., pp. 112-120.
[11] Ibid., p. 146.

objectivity of aesthetic judgments in terms of what happens to an individual's mind or inner state.

As my discussion in the following chapters will show, modern philosophers such as Hume and Kant maintain that the objectivity of the judgment of the beautiful is possible due to a certain psychological feature of an individual. Aesthetic formalists and supervenience theorists show a similar psychological approach. According to them, our perception or judgment of an object's second-order aesthetic quality (e.g., delicacy) is determined by our perception of a certain set of first-order aesthetic qualities (pale colors, slightly curved etc). In sum, the psychological character of these three sorts of aesthetic theories that I will investigate in my dissertation is not found in ancient and medieval aesthetics. In arguing for the objectivity of an aesthetic judgment (modern aesthetics), or in explaining the correct perception of the second-order aesthetic quality (aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience), *the tendency to search for the relevant features of the individual's state of mind, internal organs, phenomenal states, sensory intakes* and the like is distinctive of the moderns and more contemporary thinkers.

As I mentioned several paragraphs earlier, the psychological turn of aesthetics as it entered the modern period has already been noticed by many authors, due to the obvious and expansive discussion in this period of how our internal organs operate in making aesthetic judgments. As a project in line with this, my dissertation will show that such a psychological penchant is further developed in a more specific way in two more recent aesthetic theories, one in art criticism, and the other in the analytic tradition of aesthetics. In particular, I will show that the psychological aspect of these theories is in fact rooted in a particular picture of the mental, namely, individualism. Again, I believe that this characterization is enabled by the recognition of individualism as a distinct picture of the mental. The debate between individualism and externalism which appeared in the late 20th century in the philosophy of mind provides the perspective to characterize these aesthetic theories as based on the individualistic picture of the mental. Just as the debate has enabled us to have a critical look back at dominant theories of mind, knowledge, or language since Cartesianism, so too can it lead us to a reflective reconstruction of the three sorts of aesthetic theories in question, helping us gain insights into their characters and connections.

However, my view is not that all three aesthetic theories under examination are based on the exact same individualism. That is to say, I will differentiate the more recent two theories, aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience, from modern aesthetics; for the individualistic picture of the mental in the later theories is employed to deal with a *conceptual* issue concerning two sorts of aesthetic qualities, while modern aesthetics uses individualism to show that the *objectivity* or *universality* of aesthetic judgments can be achieved. With this differentiation in mind, I will characterize the later two theories as committed to the same version of psychological individualism, due to their assuming the same individualistic relation between perceptions of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities. This does not mean that modern aesthetics has little in common with the later theories; despite the difference just mentioned, I will show that the sort of individualism in modern aesthetics provides a set of assumptions and directions of solution for the later theories.

With this goal in mind, the first two chapters will be devoted to presenting the debate between externalism and individualism in the philosophy of mind. In chapter 1, I will have a brief look at two externalist arguments and some metaphysical and epistemological implications of them. In chapter 2, individualism will be discussed by way of examining what intuitive premises individualists use in advancing their view. In addition to this, I will show that the most basic and crude intuition that individualists tend to use is also essentially operative in the standard theories of perception, such as the sense-data theory, the adverbial theory, and some versions of the intentionalist theory of perception. The subsequent three chapters will focus on the three groups of aesthetic theories that I take to be the main constituents of western aesthetics since the modern period, that is, aesthetic formalism, the theory of aesthetic supervenience, and modern aesthetics. Chapters 3 and 4 will show that aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience are committed to a version of psychological individualism. Chapter 5 will discuss how the sort of individualism in these two theories is related to the sort of individualism in modern aesthetics. Chapter 6 will deal with some possible objections to my project. Lastly, the conclusion will make it more obvious that all three groups of aesthetics theories in question make use of the individualistic picture of the mental, which leads me to question why this point has not been discussed or noticed by others before.

As I mentioned before, it is partly owing to the fact that individualism as a picture of the mental came to be recognized as such only after the appearance of externalism, but it also seems to me that the individualistic feature in these aesthetic theories is so intuitively natural to us that we hardly pay attention to it when it is assumed. Regarding this, I will argue that the intuition that I will show to be operative in the standard theories of perception (chapter 2) is also central to the aesthetic theories in question, and that the intuitive plausibility in these aesthetic theories comes from the primitive nature of the inference that these theories make using the intuition in question as their premise. Individualism has already been shown to be the basis of the major theories of mind, knowledge, and meaning, starting from Cartesianism to theories of quite recent years, and thus we can say that these aesthetic theories that I take to be the main constituents of aesthetics since the modern period were not detached from such a philosophical current. That is to say, these aesthetic theories can be seen as another area in which the individualistic picture of the mental was deeply ingrained and powerfully operative.

1. Psychological Externalism

Consider the following example. Smith on Earth looks at a big, long, bluish fish in the ocean and judges it to be a whale, due to his incomplete understanding of what whales are; Smith does not know that a whale is a mammal. This sort of example is not hard to find around us. We can easily come up with cases in which we use a certain term without having complete knowledge of what exactly it means. A brief look at how ordinary people use scientific terms (e.g., ion, radioactivity, etc.) will provide us with sufficient examples of this sort. In fact, it is not necessary for us to look at cases in which scientific terms are used. Think about these terms for instance: "brisket", "clavichord", "elm tree", "carburetor", "gothic", "fermentation", etc. We may find ourselves having incomplete understanding of some or all of these ordinary terms, even though we use them frequently in everyday situations.

Suppose now that the same individual, Smith, is on Twin Earth. Twin Earth is exactly like Earth in every respect, except the fact that on Twin Earth the term "whale" applies to a kind of fish which is outwardly indistinguishable from the fish that Smith on Earth judges to be a whale. Notice here that Smith on Earth and Smith on Twin Earth are identical, and the only difference between the two cases is that the term "whale" on Twin Earth applies to a kind of fish, while on Earth "whale" applies to a kind of mammal. Now imagine this: looking at the same thing that Smith on Earth looks at, Smith on Twin Earth judges it to be a whale.

Regarding Smith on Earth and Smith on Twin Earth, can we say that their judgments are the same? Both of them are confronted with the same physical thing, and since they are particle for particle identical, their intrinsic data, i.e., what is going on in their inner states such as sensory input, internal qualitative experiences, dispositions to behave, brain states and the like, are the same when they are confronted with apparently the same physical entity. However, despite their having the same intrinsic data, we feel hesitant to conclude that their judgments are the same, considering the following aspect of their judgments. Let me call the big long bluish fish that both of them encounter Q. Smith on Twin Earth simply lacks the belief that Q is a whale, or any other beliefs about

whales, since no one in his linguistic community possesses the concept of whale. The word "whale" on Twin Earth simply does not mean whale. Thus, when Smith on Earth utters, "I believe that Q is a whale", he is expressing a *false* judgment, owing to his incomplete understanding of what whales are, while when Smith on Twin Earth utters, "I believe that Q is a whale", he expresses his *true* judgment that it is a (t)whale.

This example shows that there is clearly a sense in which the content of Smith's belief is determined by factors other than those that are internal to him, that is to say, factors that are outside Smith's skin. Since the intrinsic facts about him are identical in the two cases, while his judgments differ, this seems to suggest that the reason for the difference in his judgments lies in the fact that he employs the term "whale" drawn from different linguistic communities. That is to say, the contents of his judgments seem to depend in part on something other than his intrinsic data. This is the initial intuition which motivated a thesis of the mental, "psychological externalism", in the later 20th century.

In the following sections, I will give a brief overview of psychological externalism, by way of examining two well-known externalist arguments by Hilary Putnam and Tyler Burge. In order to argue that an individual's mental content is partly determined by factors in her external environment, they make use of thought experiments in which two particle for particle identical individuals are situated in different physical or social environments. The goal of their thought experiments is to show that two identical individuals with the same intrinsic data can have different mental contents, since differences in their mental contents are produced by differences in their environments. The presentation of the two externalist arguments will be followed by a discussion about some of the implications and merits of psychological externalism. After this I will move on to the next chapter to examine the rival theory of mental contents, that is, "psychological individualism".

1.1 Putnam's Thought Experiment

In "The Meaning of 'Meaning'", Hilary Putnam introduces his famous Twin Earth thought experiment to show that the meaning (as understood in the sense of extension) of

a natural kind word, such as "water", "gold", "elm", etc., is not solely determined by the concept we associate with it (what is generally taken to be the intension of a word) or by our psychological state, but in part by the characters of the physical environment in which the speaker is situated.[12] Thus, his Twin Earth thought experiment was originally intended to bear on a matter of semantics and was used to support *semantic externalism*, i.e., the view that the meaning of a natural kind word cannot be solely determined by what is internal to the speaker. However, Burge points out that Putnam's thought experiment fails in achieving his intended goal, and its conclusion should be interpreted differently in a way that bears significantly on our philosophical understanding of the mental. In other words, there is an error in Putnam's interpretation of his own thought experiment, which blinded him to realizing what it insightfully tells us about mental contents. Burge reinterprets Putnam's argument for semantic externalism, trying to bring out its true bearing on the matter of the mental. In this section, I will present Putnam's original thought experiment first as it is presented by him, and then I move on to Burge's reinterpretation of it.

According to Putnam, the traditional theory of meaning generally employs two senses of meaning, i.e., extension and intension, causing a certain degree of ambiguity in dealing with various questions about meaning. On the one hand, the traditional theory of meaning claims that the meaning of a term is the *extension* of the term, that is, the set of things of which the term is true. On the other hand, it has been consistently pointed out that there are many cases in which the notion of extension seems to ignore an important sense of meaning. For example, the compound terms such as "creature with a heart" and "creature with a kidney" have the same extension, namely, the same set of living creatures. However, despite their having the same extension, many of us are hesitant to say that they have the same meaning. This sort of example seems to suggest that the extension of a term does not exhaust the meaning of the term. In order to resolve this puzzle, the traditional theory of meaning proposes that there is another sense of meaning, namely, the "concept" associated with a term, or what is typically called the "intension"

[12] Putnam, H. (1975) "The Meaning of 'Meaning'", *Philosophical Papers II: Mind, Language, and Reality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 215-271.

of a term. In brief, the traditional theory of meaning puts forth these two senses of meaning, i.e., intension and extension, to explain different aspects of meaning.

Putnam then observes that the traditional theory of meaning with this ambiguity of the two senses of meaning results in the following two consequences. First, since the traditional theory of meaning takes intension as the concept associated with a term, intension is taken as something mental. That is to say, knowing the meaning in the sense of intension of a term is being in a certain psychological state. Second, since the concept or intension of a term is generally taken as a conjunction of predicates, it is claimed that the conjunction can provide the criteria for determining the extension of the term. In a word, according to the traditional theory of meaning, the intension determines the extension of the term.[13]

Putnam's attack is not directed at either of these two consequences, but at a third consequence implied jointly by the two aforesaid consequences. The third consequence goes as follows. The first consequence in the above maintains that an individual's knowing the meaning of a term in the sense of intension implies the individual's being in a certain psychological state. Now combining the second consequence with the first consequence leads to the claim that the individual's psychological state in knowing the meaning of the term determines the extension of the term. In a word, the third consequence coming from the combination of the former two is that *an individual's psychological state determines the extension of a term.*[14]

Now Putnam focuses on this last consequence with the goal of showing that one's psychological state cannot fix the extension of a term. And it is at this point that he brings in his Twin Earth thought experiment, at the final stage of which he attempts to show that it is possible for two individuals to be in the exact same psychological state when they use a certain term, while the extension of the term in the idiolect of the one is different from the extension of the term in the idiolect of the other.

His Twin Earth thought experiment goes as follows. Suppose there is a planet, so-called Twin Earth, in the universe which is exactly like Earth in every respect, except the one fact that on Twin Earth the liquid called "water" is not H_2O but XYZ. However,

[13] Ibid., pp. 216-219.
[14] Ibid., pp. 219-222.

despite this difference in chemical structure, the liquid called "water" on Twin Earth is pre-theoretically indistinguishable from what we call "water" on Earth. Not only this, the liquid called "water" on Twin Earth is such that it also fills the oceans and lakes of Twin Earth, and quenches thirst, and it rains XYZ on Twin Earth and so on.

And now let us imagine that there are two individuals in 1750, one on Earth, the other on Twin Earth, and they are exact particle for particle duplicates in every non-intentionally describable way (i.e. their brain states, dispositions to behave, qualitative intakes and so on do not differ). At that time, chemistry was not developed enough to figure out the chemical structure of what is called "water" in each planet. Then you may suppose that there is no belief that the Earthian had about water that the Twin Earthian did not have about what they call "water". But Putnam thinks this is not so. What Putnam wants us to pay attention to at this point is the fact that the extension of the term "water" was just as much H_2O on Earth in 1750 as in 1950; and the extension of the term "water" was just as much XYZ on Twin Earth in 1750 as in 1950. This means that, for the Earthian and the Twin Earthian in 1750, the extension of the term "water" is different, even though they were in the *same psychological state,* or to put it differently, their concepts associated with what they call "water" (e.g., that it is a clear, tasteless liquid, etc.) are the same. Using this example, Putnam concludes that the psychological state of an individual using a word does not determine the extension of that word. The Earthian and the Twin Earthian in 1750 are in the same psychological state, due to their having the same "concept" of water, while their utterances of "water" have two different extensions, i.e., things that are H_2O and things that are XYZ.[15]

At first glance, it seems that Putnam has successfully shown that semantic externalism holds when it comes to natural kind words. However, according to Burge, the thought experiment cannot lead to such a conclusion due to a mistake that Putnam makes, which consequently prevents him from realizing the true bearing of his thought experiment on the matter of the mental. To be more concrete, Burge points out that, if

[15] Ibid., pp. 223-227.

interpreted correctly, the Twin Earth thought experiment will support the externalist picture concerning the question of how mental contents are determined or individuated.[16]

What went wrong in Putnam's thought experiment is his assumption that the psychological state of the Earthian and that of the Twin Earthian are the same. According to Burge, it is a mistake to view, as Putnam does, the difference between the Earthian and the Twin Earthian uses of "water" as purely a difference in extension, while believing that the Earthian and the Twin Earthian are "exact duplicates in….feelings, thoughts, interior monologue, etc.", that is, that they are exact duplicates in psychological states.[17] But is this really true of them?

The error that Putnam makes regarding the psychological states of the Earthian and the Twin Earthian is his ignoring the fact that individuating or characterizing the contents of their thoughts involves complex reference to entities other than the individual in question. Putnam's view reflects the influence of the persistent tradition in the philosophy of mind which explains psychological states in terms of purely non-intentional, functional features of the individual, without any reference to the nature of the physical or social environment in which the subject is situated. On this view, the psychological states of the Earthian and the Twin Earthian cannot be different, for they are particle for particle duplicates in every non-intentionally describable way.[18] However, as we will see in the following paragraphs, Burge shows that factors external to the individual are reflected in obliquely occurring expressions in propositional attitude attributions, attributions which are critical in characterizing a person's beliefs, desires, hopes, etc. Given this, the difference in their physical environments between the Earthian and the Twin Earthian is reflected in the obliquely occurring expressions in the propositional attitudes attributed to them, and consequently the contents of their beliefs, hopes, desires and so on will differ. He provides the following two considerations, which he claims to give intuitive support to his view.

---

[16] Burge, T. (1982) "Other Bodies", in A. Woodfield (ed.), *Thought and Object: Essays on Intentionality*, New York: Oxford, pp. 97-120.
[17] Putnam, p. 224.
[18] Burge, pp. 112-113.

First of all, concerning Putnam's claim that the Twin Earthian and the Earthian have the same concept of water, it is hard to see how the Twin Earthian could have acquired the concept of water in the first place. There is simply no water on Twin Earth, and for this reason, the Twin Earthian has never had any contact with water, not to mention that he has never encountered anyone who had contact with water. In a word, there is no one on Twin Earth who has any contact with water or uses a word which means water. Putnam believes that the Twin Earthian has the same concept of water that the Earthian has, while the extension of the term "water" differs, but this is simply not the case, for the Twin Earthian does not even have the concept of water at all.

Putnam overlooks this simple point, for he thinks that the extension of the term "water" shifts depending on the kind of planet in which the term is uttered, in the similar way that the extension of an indexical term (e.g., "here", "I") changes according to different contexts or speakers. It can be justifiably said, when it comes to an indexical term, that its extension shifts depending on the context in which it is used, although it has a fixed linguistic meaning; for example, "here" can have different extensions, "Minneapolis" or "New York", etc., depending on where the speaker is, although it has a certain fixed linguistic meaning. However, the Twin Earth case cannot be understood in this way, for it shows a case in which a shift in *linguistic meaning* takes place from one language to another, not a shift in the *extension* of the fixed linguistic meaning. Because Putnam thinks it can be understood on the model of indexicals, he asserts that the Twin Earthian and the Earthian can share propositional attitudes that involve the same concept of water, but how this is possible is completely mysterious, considering the fact that there is no normal means of acquiring the concept of water on Twin Earth. According to Burge, the correct view is that "they (Twin Earthians) have acquired, by entirely normal means, a concept expressed in their language that bears some striking, superficial similarities to ours". However, this does not imply that their concept is the same as ours.[19]

Another point that seems to support our intuition that the Twin Earthian lacks attitudes involving the concept of water has to do with the matter of *truth*, says Burge. If the Twin Earthian expresses propositional attitudes involving the concept of water, instead of the concept of, say, twater, most of his beliefs will be false, owing to the fact

[19] Ibid., pp. 103-110.

that there is simply no water on Twin Earth. For example, the Twin Earthian's beliefs that there is water on the lake, that water quenches his thirst and so on are all false, since there is no such entity as water on Twin Earth, while his belief is considered as regarding water, as opposed to twater. This consequence is obviously quite counter-intuitive; how can we possibly justify the view that counts most of the Twin Earthian's beliefs false? Thus, in order to avoid this absurd consequence, it seems necessary to admit that the Twin Earthians' concept of what they call "water" is different from our concept of water.[20]

The above two considerations lead Burge to conclude as the following.

> The difference between Earth and Twin-Earth will affect the attributions of propositional attitudes to inhabitants of the two planets….The differences are not to be assimilated to differences in the extensions of indexical expressions with the same constant linguistic meaning. For the relevant terms are not indexical. The differences, rather, involve the constant context-free interpretation of the terms. Propositional attitude attributions which put the terms in oblique occurrence will thus affect the content of the propositional attitudes. Since mental acts and states are individuated (partly) in terms of their contents, the differences between Earth and Twin-Earth include differences in the mental acts and states of their inhabitants.[21]

In a word, differences in their environments between the Earthian and the Twin Earthian can affect the term "water" which is obliquely occurring in attributions of propositional attitudes to them, and this will result in different contents of their beliefs. And since a psychological state is individuated partly in terms of its content, now it can be said that their psychological states differ due to the differences in contents of their beliefs. With this point, Burge shows why Putnam's argument for semantic externalism, i.e., sameness in psychological state does not guarantee the same extension of the term "water", fails. It is because of the fact that the two individuals in his thought experiment *do not even have the same psychological state in the first place;* in a word, the premise on which Putnam's argument rests is critically undermined.[22]

---

[20] Ibid., pp. 110-111.
[21] Ibid., p. 107.
[22] Note that this is Burge's critique on Putnam's argument, and it is primarily intended to show what Putnam failed to realize, which Burge finds very crucial to our philosophical understanding of mental phenomena. However, a more charitable interpretation of Putnam's thought experiment, which is not so

Burge's examination shows not only this error made by Putnam, but also what should be concluded correctly from the thought experiment. According to Burge, the correct construal of the thought experiment reveals its significant bearing on our philosophical understanding of the mental: that is, "the differences in their mental states and events seem to be a product primarily of differences in their physical environment, mediated by differences in their social environment – in the mental states of their fellows and conventional meanings of words they and their fellows employ."[23] In other words, the externalist picture of the mental supported by Burge claims that identifying or individuating one's mental contents, states, and events depends partly on the nature of the person's physical and social environment. This means that an individual's mental state can be characterized using a language which is sensitive to the character of the external world, making it possible that two identical individuals can have different mental contents due to their being situated in the different physical or social environments. Putnam later on accepted the Burgean interpretation of his position, and consequently changed his view.[24]

1.2 Burge's Thought Experiment

Another argument in support of the externalist picture of the mental is made by Burge himself in his "Individualism and the Mental".[25] His thought experiment is different from Putnam's in that Burge focuses more on differences in social conventions or customs rather than on differences in physical entities or environment. What he aims to show with

---

scrupulous about the point being made by Burge, is possible in a way that allows us to say that Putnam and Burge are in much greater agreement than the above presentation implies. What Burge stresses is that the Earthian and the Twin Earthian in the thought experiment do not even have the same psychological states, and that is why the thought experiment fails. A more charitable interpretation that can save the thought experiment is to take it as arguing the following conditional: *If* the twins are in the same psychological state, *then* it still cannot be said that the extensions of the term "water" that they use are the same; in other words, the extension of the term cannot be fixed by the psychological state of the individual who uses the term. What Burge questions is the antecedent of the conditional, but the thesis of semantic externalism expressed in the whole conditional is accepted by Burge. Thus, although Burge's point is valid that they are not even in the same psychological state, the thesis of semantic externalism can be saved if understood as arguing the above conditional, and in this way we can do justice to the fact that semantic externalism and psychological externalism are on the same side against individualism.

[23] Ibid., p. 102.

[24] Putnam, H. (1982) *Reason, Truth and History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[25] Burge, T. (1979) "Individualism and the Mental", *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* IV, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp.73-121.

his thought experiment is that an individual's mental content can differ, while every physical and non-intentionally describable fact about the individual, considered in isolation from his social context, remains the same; in other words, the content of an individual's mental state cannot be characterized purely in terms of what is intrinsic to the individual, considered as an "isolated physical organism, causal mechanism, or seat of consciousness".[26] He argues that the content of an individual's mental state is partly determined by factors in his social environment, to be precise, the communal linguistic practices in which the individual is embedded. And this argument is intended to challenge the traditionally entrenched model of mental content, which he terms "individualistic". On this model, mental content is fixed purely in terms of what goes on "inside" or "on" the individual, what happens to him, and how he responds to his physical environment and the like.[27]

This implication will become clear once we have a close look at Burge's thought experiment, which consists of the following three steps.[28] The first step asks us to imagine a patient who thinks (correctly) that she has had arthritis for years, that her arthritis in the wrist and finger is more painful than her arthritis in the ankle, that certain sorts of aches are characteristic of arthritis and so on. What's more, she also thinks (falsely) that she has developed arthritis in the thigh. And suppose now that this patient reports her fear to her doctor, saying "I believe that I have arthritis in my thigh".

The second step introduces a counterfactual situation. First of all, we are to conceive of a patient who is indistinguishable from the patient in the actual situation. In other words, the patient in the counterfactual situation proceeds from birth through the same course of physical events that the actual patient does— the original patient and his twin look alike, and have the same physical make-up, internal qualitative experiences, physiological history, dispositions to respond to stimuli, pains, visual fields, sensory intakes and the like; in a word, they are particle for particle identical in the sense that every non-intentionally and asocially describable fact about them is the same. However, one thing is altered in this step when compared to the first step, namely, the social environment in which the patient is placed. In the second step, the term "arthritis" applies

[26] Ibid., p. 79.
[27] Ibid., pp.103-113.
[28] Ibid., pp. 77-79.

not only to arthritis but to various other rheumatoid ailments including one that may occur in a person's thigh. That is to say, some sort of community consisting of specialists concerning this matter, such as physicians, lexicographers, and informed laymen and the like, has determined that "arthritis" applies to various rheumatoid ailments, including the one in a person's thigh, as well as to arthritis. In fact, this is how standard use of "arthritis" is decided in both actual and counterfactual situations. In the actual situation, physicians, lexicographers, and informed laymen apply "arthritis" only to arthritis. Now we are to imagine this: at the exact moment in which the actual patient reports her fear to her doctor, her counterfactual counterpart also reports her fear to her doctor, saying "I believe that I have arthritis in my thigh".

The final step is the stage in which an interpretation of the counterfactual case takes place. We are asked to consider whether the patient in the counterfactual situation has the same belief that the patient in the actual situation has. According to Burge, the patient in the counterfactual stage lacks "some – probably all — of the attitudes commonly attributed with content clauses containing 'arthritis' in oblique occurrence"; in other words, she lacks not only the occurrent thought that she has arthritis in her thigh, but also any other belief about arthritis.[29] This is simply because no one in her linguistic community possesses the concept of arthritis. The word "arthritis" in the counterfactual case simply does not mean *arthritis*.

This argument can be better understood if we keep the following point in mind. Thoughts, beliefs, intentions and the like are typically considered to be specified in terms of "that-clauses", which may be judged as true or false, in the relevant sentences. To be more precise, it is those expressions within "that-clauses", i.e. obliquely occurring expressions in "that-clauses", that primarily do the job of providing the contents of mental states or events. For this reason, "that-clauses" are oftentimes called "content clauses". Given this, now we can clearly see why our ascription of content clauses to the patient in the counterfactual case would not constitute attributions of the same contents we actually attribute. No matter how hard we try to capture the patient's attitudes in the counterfactual situation, it will be impossible as long as we ascribe content clauses in which the term "arthritis" is obliquely occurring; for when she utters, "I believe that

[29] Ibid., pp. 78-79.

arthritis is painful", "I believe that I have arthritis in my thigh", etc., she is expressing her true beliefs that (th)arthritis is painful and she has (th)arthritis in her thigh respectively. In sum, the point being made in the final stage is this: the two identical patients possessing the same intrinsic facts about them can have different mental contents when they utter, "I believe that I have arthritis in my thigh".

Now let us focus on the implication of this thought experiment. As shown in the final stage, the thought experiment tells us that the contents of mental states or events cannot be fixed purely in terms of what happens to the patient, what occurs within her, and how she responds to her physical environment and the like. Despite the fact that they are non-intentionally indistinguishable (e.g., they share the same brain states, dispositions to behave, functional sequences of input and output, sensory intakes, phenomenal states and so on), the two particle for particle identical patients are shown to have different mental contents. Regarding this, Burge points out that what accounts for the difference in mental content between the actual and the counterfactual patient is the difference in the linguistic conventions of their respective communities. The difference in their social environments, i.e., what "arthritis" means in their respective linguistic communities, is reflected in the oblique occurrences of the term "arthritis" in propositional attitude attributions, and since one's mental states are individuated partly in terms of the contents of the person's propositional attitudes, this leads to the conclusion that their mental states will ultimately differ. What Burge emphasizes is that differences in their mental states come from differences outside the patients, when each is considered as "an isolated physical organism, causal mechanism, or seat of consciousness."[30]

Burge's argument challenges the individualistic picture of the mental which maintains that the content of a person's mental state or event is purely determined by what is going on "inside" the person, i.e., the intrinsic data about the person. This picture has been predominant in western philosophy from Cartesianism to more recent theories, e.g. behaviorism, functionalism, materialist identity theories and so on. By showing that differences in the social environment, especially in communal linguistic practice, can result in differences in mental content of the two identical individuals, Burge provides a competing picture of the mental to the individualistic one. In fact, it is with the

[30] Ibid., p. 79.

emergence of the externalist picture of the mental that the previously predominant approaches are grouped and classified as "individualistic". In the rest of this chapter, I will continue to look at some implications of psychological externalism, particularly seen from the metaphysical and epistemological perspectives.

1.3 Some Implications and Strengths of Psychological Externalism

1.3.1

It has been pointed out by many authors, from the *metaphysical* perspective, that externalist arguments refute what is known as "psychological supervenience", which claims that individuals who agree in their internal physical or non-intentionally describable states must also agree in their psychological states. In other words, externalism puts such theories as reductionist accounts of the mental or token-identity theories in danger. Defenders of these threatened theories tend to respond by directing our attention to, for example, Smith's *limited knowledge* of the concept of whale, ultimately trying to form their response along the following line: we cannot use the term "whale" *literally* in our characterization of Smith's thought, due to his limited knowledge of what whales are, that is to say, his term "whale" does not mean whale. In a word, Smith's limited knowledge of what whales are prevents us from characterizing his thought with the term "whale".

This point is then used to claim that externalist thought experiments are flawed. Externalist thought experiments make use of those cases in which the speaker has limited knowledge of a certain term or concept, and the force of the argument crucially depends on the *literal* characterization of the content of an individual's thought in the actual situation, which will be shown to be different from the content of the identical individual's thought in the counterfactual situation. The main attacking point put forth by defenders of psychological supervenience is that literal characterizations and attributions of content in the actual situation are not possible in the externalist thought experiments. They argue that we should instead try to *interpret* Smith's use of "whale", and then characterize the content of his thought according to the interpretation. They suggest that the term "whale" should be interpreted as meaning some other entity than whale, an

entity that Smith himself means by using "whale", that is, a certain kind of fish which is indistinguishable from whales in their outward appearances. And if the content of Smith's thought in the actual stage is characterized in this manner through our interpretation of what he means by "whale", then the contents of Smith's thought in the actual and the counterfactual stages will be the same. In sum, this line of defense claims that the thought experiment cannot refute the thesis of psychological supervenience, for the two individuals who agree in their intrinsic data are now shown to agree in their psychological states as well.

This line of argument is hardly plausible. In fact, Joseph Owens says that it only ends up highlighting the strength of psychological externalism for the following reason. When we use a certain term in reporting what a speaker says or thinks, we do not require that the speaker should have complete knowledge of the term or the concept involved. We certainly want to be able to talk meaningfully about the case in which Smith genuinely wonders whether whales are fish. But the above line of defense in support of psychological supervenience does not allow us to characterize his wonderment about whether whales are fish, for it claims that we cannot use the term "whale" literally in characterizing his wonderment. And if Smith's term "whale" is interpreted as meaning some entity of his own invention, then it becomes obvious why this impedes our characterizing the content of his wonderment. How can he possibly wonder whether whales are fish when he already understands "whale" as a sort of fish?[31] Thus, one of the consequences of this line of defense is that we cannot literally say of Smith that he wonders whether whales are fish, and this is simply absurd.

Regarding the above defense in support of psychological supervenience, Burge observes that it in fact reveals a critical but unjustified assumption in the individualistic approach to the mental. He pinpoints the assumption as the following:

> The assumption in question is that what a person thinks his words mean, how he takes them, fully determines what attitudes he can express in using them: the contents of his mental states and events are strictly limited to notions, however idiosyncratic, that he understands; a person cannot think with notions he incompletely understands.[32]

[31] Owens, J. (1994) "Psychological Externalism", *The Mind-Body Problem: A Guide to the Current Debate*, Cambridge: Blackwell, pp. 138-139.
[32] Burge, "Individualism and the Mental", p. 102.

That is to say, the assumption claims that, even though the arthritis patient in the actual stage is mistaken about what arthritis is and her knowledge is limited, the content of her belief should be characterized by her "full understanding" of *what she thinks her word means*. According to this view, the patient in the actual stage clearly knows what her word "arthritis" means, i.e., various rheumatoid ailments not only in the joints but also in the thigh, and such a full understanding fixes the content of her thought. It is true that her notion of arthritis is idiosyncratic, but for defenders of psychological supervenience, the alleged fact that she fully understands her own idiosyncratic notion of "arthritis" should fix our characterization of her thoughts. Having a full understanding of what you mean by a word is a necessary condition for having propositional attitudes with content that is characterized by that word.

This assumption, however, leads to implausible consequences. We normally say that the patient in the actual stage has a false belief; her belief that she has arthritis in her thigh is apparently false. However, if we interpret her term "arthritis" as covering not just arthritis but whatever it is in her thigh, then her belief becomes true. Interpreting the patient's term "arthritis" in this way replaces false contents due to her misconception by true contents, and this too is very implausible. Here is another absurd consequence: according to the assumption, if her doctor tells her that arthritis cannot occur outside the joint, her response would be that her term "arthritis" in fact means not just arthritis but also whatever it is in her thigh, and that it is this idiosyncratic notion that she uses in uttering her fear. This is undeniably implausible. Instead, the patient is likely to realize that she has misconceived the notion, and consequently that her belief is not true. In short, the above line of defense in support of psychological supervenience by taking into account what a person thinks her words mean only generates a highly implausible picture of mental phenomena. This ultimately ends up highlighting the advantages of externalism.

1.3.2

In this section, I will present two *epistemological* implications that Owens discusses in his "Psychological Externalism".[33] According to Owens, some philosophers have argued that externalism tells against our intuition that we have authoritative first-person knowledge of our own occurrent beliefs, while others have argued, to the contrary, that externalism can summarily dismiss traditional skeptical concerns concerning our claims to know the external world. In other words, the former says that externalism can be used to extend the scope of skepticism to the realm of mental contents, while the latter says that externalism provides a decisive argument against the skeptic.

Let me focus on the first alleged implication that externalism extends the scope of skepticism to the realm of mental contents. This examination will show that externalism has a certain bearing on our intuitive conception of ourselves as having self-knowledge. The intuitive conception that we seem to have concerning the contents of our occurrent thoughts is that we have first-person knowledge of those occurrent thoughts, which is direct and authoritative in character. Simply put, we tend to think that each individual has the special access to the contents of the individual's own occurrent thoughts. Thus, my having such a special access to my occurrent thoughts is oftentimes supposed to be sufficient for my self-knowledge about the contents of my occurrent thoughts.

Regarding this intuition about self-knowledge, some authors have pointed out that externalism poses a serious threat to it in the following way. Externalists claim that our thoughts have the contents they have only if the external world is of a certain kind, that is, the contents of our beliefs are determined in part by how the world is. However, since we do not have any special access to the external world, it follows that we cannot have introspective knowledge of our occurrent beliefs, and this consequence of externalism seems to tell against the above intuition about self-knowledge. Let me take an example to illustrate this argument better. Since externalism claims that the content of my occurrent thought, e.g., "Water is clear", is determined in part by what kind of world I am embedded in (whether I am on Earth where "water" denotes H_2O or on Twin Earth where "water" denotes XYZ), and since more than rational introspection is necessary to know

[33] Ibid., pp. 141-147.

whether I am on Earth or Twin Earth, externalism seems to reject our intuition that we can introspectively know the contents of our own thoughts.

Does externalism indeed undermine our intuition about self-knowledge? Owens says that in fact it is perfectly compatible with self-knowledge, and the sort of argument in the above paragraph, which some authors have used to claim that externalism undermines self-knowledge, is based on a crucial misreading of the externalist picture. The argument in the above paragraph can be refashioned in the following way.

> Suppose I think "aluminum is light" and I then make the second-order judgment that I am now entertaining the thought that aluminum is light. If, unbeknownst to me, my world is of the twin-earth kind, then this judgment is mistaken. Since more than mere rational introspection is necessary to rule out the possibility that I am in a twin-earth context, more than introspection is needed to eliminate this kind of error. Hence, I cannot be said to introspectively *know* the contents of my own mind.[34]

It is true that externalism shows that the contents of one's beliefs are in part determined by factors external to the individual. Thus, when I make a second-order judgment, "I am now entertaining the thought that aluminum is light", I may not know the content of this judgment, due to the fact that I can never tell whether I am on Earth or Twin Earth by introspectively looking into my mind. (Notice here that I am merely following the argument in question, but this statement will be questioned later on.) In brief, according to this argument, if externalism is true, then the accuracy of sincere, first-person attitude reports is seriously undermined.

This argument, however, is problematic. Owens argues that it is true that "the contents of one's beliefs are in part a function of external factors, but this does not provide a *new source of error* (my italics)."[35] What he means by this is that there is a match between our beliefs (i.e., first-order beliefs) and our introspective awareness of what we believe (i.e., second-order beliefs). Thus, those features of the external world that determine the content of my belief that water is wet also determine the content of my introspective belief that I am now entertaining the thought that water is wet. Therefore, according to the externalist picture, a new factor cannot come into play in determining

[34] Ibid., p. 143.
[35] Ibid., p. 143.

the content of the introspective, second-order belief; what determines the content of a first-order belief also determines the content of the relevant second-order belief. In other words, when I think, "water is wet", my introspection alone is not capable of discerning whether it is a water-thought or a twater-thought, and this is what externalism tells us. However, this does not lead to the consequence that my introspective second-order thought, i.e., "I am now entertaining the thought that water is wet", can also be mistaken. We can make a sincere, first-person report of our second-order thought directed toward the first-order thought, even though we may not know whether our first-order thought is a water-thought or a twater-thought by introspection alone. In sum, the externalist idea that the content of a thought is in part determined by factors in the external world is fully compatible with our intuitive conception of self-knowledge.

Burge also provides a similar argument in support of the compatibility of externalism and our intuition about self-knowledge. According to him, a certain similarity between our self-knowledge and perceptual knowledge can illuminate how externalism is compatible with our intuition of self-knowledge. The character of our perceptual knowledge that Burge focuses on is this:

> It is a fundamental mistake to think that perceptual knowledge of physical entities requires, as a precondition, knowledge of the conditions that make such knowledge possible. Our epistemic right to our perceptual judgments does not rest on some prior justified belief that certain enabling conditions are satisfied. In saying that a person knows, by looking, that there is food there, we are not required to assume that the person knows the causal conditions that make his perception possible. We certainly do not, in general, require that the person has first checked that the light coming from the food is not bent through mirrors, or that there is no counterfeit food in the vicinity.[36]

The character of our perceptual knowledge being discussed in this quote is that we are not required to have a perfect, prior mastery over the "enabling conditions" for our perceptual success, in order to have a perceptual knowledge that there is food.

Burge then argues that the same point applies to knowledge of one's own mental events. When a person thinks, "water is clear", and also thinks, "I am now entertaining the thought that water is clear", it can be said that there are two levels of thoughts: a first-order thought, e.g., "water is clear", and a second-order thought, e.g., "I am now

[36] Burge, T. (1988) "Individualism and Self-Knowledge", *Journal of Philosophy* 85, p. 654.

entertaining the thought that water is clear". Burge says that in order for this individual to have the first-order thought, he needs to know some of its enabling conditions; he must have some empirical experiences of what water is like. However, those enabling conditions are not required in order for the individual to have the second-order belief that he is now entertaining the thought that water is clear. The second-order thought is directed toward the first-order thought, and thus inherits the content of the first-order thought in a "reflexive, immediate way". Because of this self-referential characteristic of our second-order thoughts, we cannot be mistaken about the contents of them when we have them.

> One knows one's thought to be what it is simply by thinking it while exercising second-order, self-ascriptive powers. One has no "criterion," or test, or procedure for identifying the thought, and one needs not exercise comparisons between it and other thoughts in order to know it as the thought one is thinking. Getting the "right" one is simply a matter of thinking the thought in the relevant reflexive way.[37]

Burge concludes that our common intuition about self-knowledge captures this self-referential characteristic of second-order thoughts, while the externalist view has no relevance on this matter. In sum, his view is that the contents of an individual's first-order thoughts are partly determined by how the world is, as externalists claim, but the contents of an individual's second-order thoughts are determined in the "immediate and reflexive way" in which we use the special, authoritative access to our mental states and events. Therefore, externalism is compatible with the intuitive conception of ourselves as having self-knowledge of our own thoughts.[38]

However, this does not mean that externalism is compatible with every kind of introspective capacity. What Owens and Burge point out is that the capacity of a subject to recognize the contents of her explicit thoughts is compatible with externalism. However, there is another kind of introspective capacity which is alleged to be held by us, namely, the capacity of a subject to introspectively determine *sameness and difference of her beliefs*. This view is responsible for the pervasive attitude that we tend to have such that a fully rational subject would never be committed to explicit contradiction; as a

[37] Ibid., p. 656.
[38] Ibid., pp. 654-656.

rational being, she would never believe both P and not P at the same time, for she is capable of comparing her thoughts. Now it becomes obvious that externalism is not compatible with this kind of introspection. According to externalism, our arthritis patient in the actual stage would have a different belief if she were in the counterfactual stage, but her rational introspection alone can never enable her to see the difference in content of her thoughts, no matter how hard she compares her actual thought with her counterfactual thought. In brief, externalism is not compatible with this notion of introspection.

Regarding this seeming conflict between externalism and the sort of introspection in question, Owens argues that the conflict is not even real, for there is no reason to think that the sort of introspection can be employed by us in the first place. Let us have a look at an example he provides. Suppose you have these two thoughts:

> 1. Nobody doubts that whoever believes that Mary is a physician believes that Mary is a physician.
>
> 2. Nobody doubts that whoever believes that Mary is a doctor believes that Mary is a physician.

Now ask yourself whether you entertain the same thought when you entertain thought 1 and when you entertain thought 2. You know what you think when you entertain 1 and you also know what you think when you entertain 2, but you may well be puzzled by the question whether you express the same thought in 1 and 2. In order for you to be able to say that they are the same thoughts or not, you need more than just looking into your thoughts with rational introspection; you need to take into consideration whatever relevant theory there is concerning this matter, be it linguistic, psychology, philosophy, etc., and this cannot be provided by introspection alone.[39] Thus, the idea that we can determine sameness and difference of the contents of our thoughts is itself problematic, and there is no need to think that externalism undermines this sort of introspection. The sort of introspection that externalism is incompatible with does not seem to be employed by us in the first place.

[39] Owens, pp. 144-145.

So far my examination of externalism's bearing on our conception of self-knowledge shows that externalism does not undermine sincere, first-person reports of one's beliefs, but tells against the view that the rational subject should be able to determine sameness and difference in belief by introspection. In a word, externalism helps us have a better understanding of the features of self-knowledge, which can be seen as another point of strength of externalism.

In this chapter, I have examined two externalist arguments and some metaphysical and epistemological implications of externalism to discuss its implications and strengths. Now I will move on to the rival picture of the mental, psychological individualism, which has been traditionally persistent and dominant but only recently recognized as a thesis of the mental with the appearance of externalism. I will draw on the debate between externalism and individualism in the philosophy of mind to construct a perspective for examining aesthetic formalism, the theory of aesthetic supervenience, and modern aesthetics.

2. Psychological Individualism

Individualism has been defended by many against externalism in philosophical discussions of mental contents, one of the main reasons being that it seems intuitively right in illuminating some aspects of mental contents. In fact, its intuitive appeal explains its dominance in the post-Cartesian tradition. However, it is not easy to characterize what ties all individualists together; finding the common foundation among Descartes, idealists such as Berkeley, Leibniz, and materialist reductionists, without distorting the core of their theories is difficult. Since it is not my aim to come up with a characterization of individualism which does justice to all individualists, I will just use the following rough characterization that Burge provides after reviewing several possible characterizations.

> Individualism is the view that an individual person or animal's mental state and event kinds – including the individual's intentional or representational kinds – can in principle be individuated in complete independence of the natures of empirical objects, properties, or relations (excepting those in the individual's own body, on materialist and functionalist views) – and similarly do not depend essentially on the natures of the minds or activities of other (non-divine) individuals. The mental natures of an individual's mental states and events are such that there is no necessary or other deep individuative relation between the individual's being in states, or undergoing events, with those natures, and the nature of the individual's physical and social environment.[40]

As I mentioned, individualism seems to have been motivated by some of our deep-seated intuitions, and that is why it has thrived through different versions as a theory of mind since the early modern period. However, Burge points out that we cannot derive psychological individualism from those intuitions, even though it may seem that those intuitions justifiably lead to it at first glance. The first part of this chapter will be devoted to have a look at this topic discussed by Burge, focusing on why we tend to find psychological individualism intuitively plausible and why this tendency cannot be justified.

[40] Burge, T. (1986) "Cartesian Error and the Objectivity of Perception", in J. McDowell and P. Pettit (eds.), *Subject, Thought, and Context* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 118-119.

To be more concrete, Burge says that philosophers, even when they are not committed to Cartesianism, have a tendency to derive individualism from the intuitions that Descartes makes use of in constructing his skeptical thought experiment. His famous thought experiment asks us to question the certainty of our beliefs and perceptions of the external world, including those of our own body, and in order to systematically do so he introduces the hypothesis of dream and demonic deception. According to Burge, what makes the hypothesis powerful is that it "capitalizes on the causal gap we tend to assume between the world and its effects on us"[41]. The idea of the causal gap is roughly that I could be radically mistaken about the nature of the outside empirical world, for I can easily imagine cases in which different causes in the outside world could have produced the same effects, especially the same physical effects on my sense organs. The possibility that what causes my thoughts and perceptions could be very different from what I think causes them is the intuition that gives power to the Cartesian thought experiment. No matter how vivid my perception or thought of the world seems, I can still remain conscious of the "contingency of the relation between the way the objective world is and its effects on us."[42] Burge then argues that this intuition of the causal gap can be broken down into four elements, but none of those elements supports the individualistic picture of the mind.

2.1

The first element that Burge focuses on in our intuition of the causal gap is, not surprisingly, the *causal* element: *the possibility that different causal antecedents could issue in the same physical effects on the individual's body, and perhaps even issue in the same phenomenological mental phenomena.* Now, can we say that from this intuition the individualistic picture of the mind is justifiably derived? Burge's answer is negative, and to explain why, he draws our attention to the fact that he uses the very same intuition in his argument against individualism.[43]

[41] Ibid., p. 120.
[42] Ibid., p. 120.
[43] Ibid., pp. 120-121.

Recall the case of Twin Earth in which what they call "water" is XYZ but pre-theoretically indistinguishable from what we call "water" on Earth such that it fills the oceans and lakes, quenches thirst, and it rains XYZ on Twin Earth and so forth, and there is a Twin-Earthian who is particle for particle identical with an Earthian with the same physical history and non-intentionally describable experiences. Since what is called "water" is XYZ on Twin Earth, we can say that Twin Earth is an environment that lacks water altogether, and contains some superficially similar liquid instead, but in such a fashion that the Twin-Earthian's body is not differently affected. Notice that this is the exact case that the first element of the intuition speaks of, i.e., the case in which a relevantly different environment causes the same physical effects on the identical individuals. However, as this case clearly shows, the intuition in question does not lead to individualism; instead it is used to refute individualism. Burge's thought experiment shows that, despite the fact that the differences in their environments cause the same physical effects on the two identical individuals, their mental contents are differently individuated or characterized due to the differences in the nature of their environments. In brief, Burge shows that both individualism and his anti-individualistic argument capitalize on the same intuition of the causal gap in the Cartesian thought experiment, and therefore we cannot say that the intuition in question leads to individualism.

The second element that Burge finds in the Cartesian intuition is *epistemic* in character, which goes as follows: *one could be drastically wrong about the nature of the empirical world around one.* We seem to acknowledge that it is epistemically possible that the world be, or have been, very different from the way we reasonably think it is; in a word, the second intuitive element is our recognition that we are fallible about the nature of the external world. And the skeptical power of the Cartesian thought experiment seems to come from this realization. Now consider whether this element supports the individualistic picture of the mental?

Burge's answer is negative again. For saying that our thoughts about the world might be radically mistaken does not imply anything about how our thoughts about the world are determined to be what they are. Individualism advances a thesis about how our thoughts about the world are individuated or determined, and the idea is that they are individuated or determined in complete independence of the natures of the empirical

world. But the second element of the Cartesian intuition (i.e., we are fallible about the nature of the world) has no bearing on the issue of how our thoughts about the world are determined or individuated. The idea that our thoughts would be subject to errors if things were radically otherwise does not lead to the claim that the contents of our thoughts are unaffected by any possible differences in the environment. Therefore, such a move, as Burge points out, is not justified, and thus individualists cannot use this epistemic element in support of their thesis of mental contents.[44]

The third intuitive element that Burge notices in the Cartesian thought experiment is also *epistemic* in character, according to which each individual *has a direct and authoritative access to the contents of their own occurrent thoughts.* The Cartesian thought experiment is based on the idea that we are capable of reflecting introspectively on what is going on in our inner private mind; it relies on the conviction that each individual has a privileged access to the contents of their own occurrent beliefs, desires, hopes and so on. And the goal of the thought experiment is to show that we can reach the secure and certain foundation of knowledge, using our rational introspection alone. Regardless of whether his argument is sound or not, the fact that he was able to argue that the secure and certain foundation is ascertainable not in virtue of any complicated philosophical methods but with the help of what every rational being seems to have (i.e., rational introspection on one's own mental states or events) makes his argument compelling. Then does this element finally support the individualistic picture of mental contents? Again, Burge says that it does not, for the following reason.

It is true that we have a privileged access to our own occurrent thoughts about the world, although we can imagine that those thoughts could be quite mistaken. And it is also true that we would have the same privileged access to our own occurrent thoughts about the world if we were in the counterfactual situation. That is to say, we have a privileged access to our present mental events in both cases; who else can have the kind of access I have to my occurrent thoughts than myself? But this does not lead to the individualistic conclusion that we can know what thoughts we would think if we were in the counterfactual situation; the individualistic conclusion is that the thoughts we would

[44] Ibid., pp. 121-123.

think if we were in the counterfactual situation is determined in complete independence of the nature of the external world.

For example, I have a direct and authoritative access to my occurrent belief, "water is wet", when I am on Earth, and this is also the case if I were on Twin Earth and had a belief, "water is wet". However, my having such an access in both cases alike does not mean that the content of my thought is determined regardless of whether I am on Earth or Twin Earth. That is to say, it does not imply that the content of my thought is determined independently of the nature of the world in which I am placed. My having the sort of access that others cannot have to my own occurrent mental states has no bearing on the issue of how the contents of my or anyone's thoughts are determined. The latter focuses on the question of *how the contents of one's thoughts are determined or individuated,* which is a philosophical issue inviting different views to be advanced and defended, not an issue over which anyone has the first-person authority. Thus, the individualist cannot simply move from the fact that we can make sincere, first-person reports of our own mental states to their thesis about the determination or individuation of our thoughts, according to which the contents of our thoughts are determined in complete independence of the nature of the outside world. In brief, the individualist takes my having a special access to my occurrent thoughts as meaning that none other than myself can determine the contents of my thoughts. [45]

Notice that the third intuition is compatible with the externalist view that our thoughts are determined to be what they are partly by the nature of our environment. See section 3 of chapter 1 in which the compatibility of externalism with our conception of self-knowledge is discussed.

2.2

I have examined three intuitive elements on which the Cartesian thought experiment rests. The first is that different causal antecedents could issue in the same physical effects on the individual's body; according to the second, one could be drastically wrong about the nature of the empirical world around one; finally, the third claims that each individual

[45] Ibid., pp. 123-124.

has a direct and authoritative access to the contents of one's own thoughts. My presentation so far is about Burge's argument that psychological individualism needs justifications beyond what the three intuitive elements provide.

In addition to these three intuitions, Burge discusses one more intuitive element that he finds operative in the Cartesian thought experiment. Just as the three discussed so far, the fourth has also been used in support of individualism, but Burge again shows that it does not lead to individualism. The intuition in question is this**:** *we could have the same perceptual experiences, same perceptual representations, whether these were veridical perceptions, misperceptions, or hallucinations.*[46]

We can define an illusion roughly as a perceptual experience in which a real, physical object actually being perceived appears to be other than it really is. For example, a straight stick half-submerged in water looks bent, or a blue object looks violet when the lighting of the room is red and so on. Plenty of examples of illusion can be found in our everyday encountering with objects, but what those examples have in common is that the object perceptually appears to have a quality or qualities that the object does not actually have. On the other hand, a hallucination can be understood as an experience which seems as if we were having a perception of a real, ordinary object in the external world, while there is in fact no such mind-independent object. For example, a certain dose of LSD might cause me to have a perceptual experience of seeing snow falling, which may be indistinguishable from my having a genuine perception of snow falling.

From the observation that we can experience an illusion or a hallucination which is subjectively or experientially indistinguishable from having a veridical perception, individualists tend to conclude that perceptual experiences are independent, for their intentional natures, of the perceiver's environment. This inference cannot be justified, argues Burge, and I want to have a close look at this topic in the following pages. This will ultimately lead us to a discussion about how the unjustified inference in question is in fact central to the standard views of perception, which have not been challenged until quite recently. Thus, I will firstly give a brief presentation of the standard views of perception to make it clear that they are indeed based on an individualistic inference

[46] Ibid., p. 125.

starting with the fourth intuition in question, and then I will move on to examine Burge's rejection of the inference.

2.3

Many philosophers have been attracted to the phenomena of illusion and hallucination, for they find that the phenomena create a puzzle concerning the nature of perception, the core of which goes as follows. We tend to ordinarily think that our perceptions are "open" to the world in the sense that real objects in the world seem to be present in our perceptual experiences; that is to say, our perceptual experiences seem to provide us with a direct path to reality.[47] However, this ordinary conception of "openness" seems to be threatened by the existence of the phenomena such as illusions and hallucinations. The idea that we are "directly" or "immediately" aware of ordinary, mind-independent, public objects in the world is challenged by the fact that we sometimes experience illusions and hallucinations, which creates the implausibility of preserving the same idea in the case of hallucination or illusion. Thus, the existence of illusion and hallucination is oftentimes taken to be a serious threat to our common-sense notion of perception, and many philosophers since Locke have tried to deal with the threat. Before moving on to talk about some of the proposed solutions for this puzzle, which is generally called, "the problem of perception", I want to talk a bit more about the threat itself.[48]

The threat posed by the phenomena of illusion or hallucination is captured in the so-called "argument from illusion" or "argument from hallucination" put forth by a number of philosophers. First of all, according to the argument from illusion, the existence of illusion conflicts with our ordinary conception of perception, for the following reason. When we are experiencing an illusion, it seems that we are aware of something that has a certain quality, but since it is an illusion it is not a quality that the real ordinary object supposedly being perceived actually has. This suggests that, in the

---

[47] McDowell, J. (1994) "The Content of Perceptual Experience", *Philosophical Quarterly* 44, p. 111.

[48] Some parts of my presentation in this section are taken from the following entries in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy:
Crane, T. "The Problem of Perception", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2011 Edition),* E. N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/entries/perception-problem/>.
See also Huemer, M. "Sense-Data", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2011 Edition),* E. N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/entries/sense-data/>.

case of an illusion, either we are not aware of the real object, or we are aware of it only "indirectly". Now notice that, from the point of view of the subject in experience, the experience of an illusion is the same as the experience of a genuine perception. That is, the experiential indistinguishability between veridical perception and illusion holds. Thus, there is no experiential ground for separating the veridical perception as the one in which a real, physical object is directly experienced. In conclusion, our ordinary view about perception in general, namely, "naïve realism" or "direct realism", that real, mind-independent objects are directly experienced in our perception, is not correct. This is how the sameness of phenomenology between genuine perception and illusion challenges our ordinary notion of perception.

As with the argument from illusion, the argument from hallucination also claims that our ordinary conception of perception is deeply problematic. It starts with an observation that, for someone who is experiencing a hallucination, it is subjectively or experientially indistinguishable from a genuine perception; in a word, they are experiences of essentially the same kind. And the fact that hallucinations can occur in the absence of any ordinary, physical, mind-independent objects leads to the conclusion that the nature of a hallucination does not depend on them. The next step in the argument claims that the nature of a genuine perception does not depend on any real object either, for genuine perceptions and hallucinations are experiences of the same kind. And from this it is concluded that our ordinary view of perception, naïve realism, is not correct.

2.3.1

Many theories have attempted to respond to this threat by looking for ways to reconcile such phenomena with what are generally taken to be the central features of perception. The first theory I want to examine is called the *sense-data theory,* the contemporary version of which was advanced by several early 20th century philosophers such as Russell, Price, and Ayer.[49] The theory flourished in the first half of the 20th century,

[49] Russell, B. (1912) *The Problem of Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Price, H.H. (1932) *Perception*, London: Methuen.
Ayer, A.J. (1956) *The Problem of Knowledge*, London: Macmillan.

though its popularity declined significantly in the latter half. I will mainly focus on the advantages that this theory has in solving the "problem of perception".

The puzzle in question is how to make sense of something we seem to encounter in the case of illusion or hallucination; we seem to experience some objects, but what are they? They cannot be ordinary, physical, mind-independent objects, for then our perceptual experiences of them are no longer illusory or hallucinatory. It is at this point that the sense-data theory puts forth its central claim that, in the case of illusion or hallucination, what we experience is *objects of another sort*, i.e., "non-ordinary" objects that we can call *sense-data*. And since sense-data theorists hold that hallucinations and illusions are the same kind of experiences as genuine perceptions, they conclude that they are also sense-data that are the object of a veridical perception. In sum, according to the sense-data theory, what we experience in a perception, whether it is veridical, illusory, or hallucinatory, is a private, non-physical entity, i.e., sense-datum.

One of the reasons why the sense-data theory was accepted and defended by major early 20th century philosophers is that it seems to be able to preserve a crucial aspect of our ordinary conception of perception, which is that when in perception of whatever kind, there seem to be some *object of experience* that we encounter. The sense data theory seems to preserve this aspect by maintaining that those objects are sense-data.

However, there is a characteristic of the sense-data theory that deviates significantly from the ordinary conception of perception. According to the sense-data theory, objects of experiences in perception are *mind-dependent* in that they are some sort of "mental images", "impressions", "appearances", or "percepts" that cannot exist unperceived. Some might say that this view deviates so much from our ordinary conception that the sense-data theory can hardly be seen as doing justice to it. However, there is no need to think that the sense-data theory conflicts with our seeming to experience *as if* the objects of our perceptions were mind-independent. For the sense-data theorists can acknowledge this as one of our inclinations or habits, while claiming that it is a common error that we are likely to commit. For example, Hume distinguishes the "vulgar" view of perception from the "philosophical" one, emphasizing that it is only when we reflect on our perceptual experiences with a serious philosophical methodology that we come to realize that the direct objects of our perceptual experiences are in fact

mind-dependent entities.[50] Again, such a philosophical view can still be compatible with the vulgar and naïve view of perception, for it maintains that, prior to our employment of any philosophical methodology, the objects of experiences *appear* to be ordinary things around us. Similar strategies have been used by sense-data theorists to preserve our ordinary conception of perception, and this leads to another characteristic of the sense-data theory, i.e., the distinction between things we are directly aware of and things we are indirectly aware of; we are *directly* aware of mind-dependent sense-data, while *indirectly* aware of ordinary, physical objects by virtue of perceiving the relevant sense-data.

To sum up, while keeping one of the crucial elements of the ordinary conception of perception (i.e., there are *objects of experiences*), the sense-data theory puts forward, first, the notion of mind-dependent objects of experiences, and second, the distinction between direct and indirect awareness, in its attempt to make sense of the phenomena of illusion and hallucination.

2.3.2

One of the main characteristics of the sense-data theory is that it postulates a new metaphysical entity, i.e., sense-data, which some philosophers find unnecessary. According to these philosophers, there is no need to bring in such an extra metaphysical entity to deal with the problem of perception, for we can explain a perceptual experience in terms of the *occurrence of a mental act or mental state* with its own intrinsic character. For example, when we perceive, say, a brown square board, we can account for the experience as our being in a certain specific *state* of sensing or sensory awareness, instead of our being presented with some *object* of experience. To put it differently, we can think of those qualities that we seem to sense, say, brownness and squareness, as *modifications of the experience* itself. This does not mean that the experience itself is brown and square, but that the experience is modified in such a way that it can be said that we are visually sensing "brownly and squarely"; we are in a specific experiential mental state, that is, a "brownly and squarely" state.

[50] See Hume, D. (1978 [1739-1740]) *A Treatise of Human Nature*, 2nd edition, ed. by P. Nidditch, Clarendon Press, pp. 124-142, 157-166, 187-223.

This theory, defended by philosophers such as Ducasse and Chisholm in the mid 20th century, is called the *adverbial theory,* since the theory talks about specific manners or states of sensing which can be indicated by employing adverbial modifications of the perceptual verbs.[51]

The advantage of the adverbial theory compared to the sense-data theory is obvious. It is metaphysically simple, as a result of not introducing a new sort of entity such as sense-data, which is seriously in need of more justification. The adverbial theory provides an account of perception and deals with the problem of perception by talking about experiences themselves and ways in which those experiences are modified. The experiential indistinguishability between my veridical perception and illusion of a brown square board is explained in terms of the state of sensing itself such that there is no difference in the specific way in which I sense. In a word, the sort of experiential state in which I am is the same for both cases.

2.3.3

The third theory of perception which attempts to deal with the problem of perception is the *intentionalist theory of perception*, also known as the *representational theory of perception*[52]. "Intentionality" can be defined in various ways depending on the area of philosophy under discussion, but in philosophical discussions of mind it is roughly understood as the "mind's direction upon its objects", "the power of mind to be about, to represent, to stand for, things, properties, and states of affairs", or the "aboutness" of mental states, following Brentano's initial discussion.[53] And within the analytic tradition of the philosophy of mind, the intentionalist theory of perception generally refers to an idea proposed by Anscombe, Armstrong, and Pitcher.[54]According to this theory, an

---

[51] Ducasse, C.J. (1942) "Moore's Refutation of Idealism", in P. Schilpp (ed.), *The Philosophy of G.E. Moore*, Chicago: Northwestern University Press, pp. 223-252.
Chisholm, R. (1957) *Perceiving: A Philosophical Study*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

[52] I will mainly use the term "intentional theory of perception" from now on, for fear that "representational theory of perception" might be confused with "representationalism" which concerns the *justification* of beliefs about the physical world rather than the nature of perception.

[53] Brentano, F. (1973 [1874]) *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoin*t, trans. by Rancurello, Terrell and McAlister, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

[54] Anscombe, G.E.M. (1965) "The Intentionality of Sensation: a Grammatical Feature", in R.J. Butler (ed.) *Analytical Philosophy: First Series,* Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 143-158.

intentional mental state is about, or represents, something in the world, and its content is how it represents the world to be a certain way to the perceiver.

In order to understand the intentionalist theory of perception, it is crucial to notice that the focus of intentionalists is mainly on the relation between intentional content and phenomenology of experience. Firstly, what is the *phenomenal character* of an experience? We can roughly understand it as "what it is like" for the subject to undergo the experience.[55] It seems not so clear how we can spell out in words exactly what it is like to experience, say, redness, but according to those philosophers making use of the notion of phenomenal character, there is at least a sense in which we can say that the experience of seeing red is more like the experience of seeing blue, in respect of their phenomenal characters, than what it is like to experience the smell of coffee. This sense in question is what intentionalists want to capture with the notion of phenomenal character. The second element of the intentionalist theory is the notion of *intentional content*. The standard view among intentionalists is that the intentional content of an experience is how the world is represented or seems to us to be a certain way, and that it can be captured as a propositional content. Now regarding the relation between these two elements, most intentionalists hold that the intentional content of an experience determines its phenomenal character; in other words, there can be no difference in phenomenal character without a difference in content. This means that if two visual experiences differ in phenomenal character, then they differ in content.[56]

Now let me examine how the intentionalist theory deals with the problem of perception. The intentionalist explains the indistinguishability of veridical perception and illusion/hallucination by pointing out that they have the same intentional content, that is to say, how the world is represented as being to the perceiver is the same. For example, suppose that someone walking in the desert is experiencing a hallucination of a water fountain. The theory explains this individual's hallucination as having the same intentional content as the individual's veridical perception of a water fountain; how the

---

Armstrong, D.M. (1968) *A Materialist Theory of the Mind*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
Pitcher, G. (1970) *A Theory of Perception*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
[55] Farrell, B.A. (1950) "Experience", *Mind* 59, pp. 170-198.
Nagel, T. (1974) "Review of Armstrong's A Material Theory of the Mind", *Philosophical Review* 79, pp. 394-403.
[56] Byrne, A. (2001) "Intentionalism Defended", *Philosophical Review* 110, pp. 199-240.

world is represented as being is the same in both cases. And since intentionalists in general hold that the phenomenal character of an experience is determined by the content of the experience, now the individual in both cases can be seen as having the same phenomenal state as well. Given this, the intentionalist picture seems to suggest that there is no significant difference between genuine perception and hallucination/illusion, and this is in fact what they maintain. According to intentionalists, there is no special puzzle about illusions and hallucinations, for they are simply *misrepresentations* of how the world is. Therefore, the main task for them is to understand the nature of representation itself rather than treating the phenomena of illusion and hallucination as in need of special explanations. In other words, intentionalists believe that these three kinds of perception can be explained by virtue of understanding representation itself, and there is no special difficulty in making sense of the nature of illusion and hallucination.

However, this seems to create a different puzzle in its own right. Since there is no real object being perceived in a hallucination, while the intentionalist argues that it has the same intentional content with the relevant veridical perception, this seems to lead to the conclusion that, in both veridical and hallucinatory perceptions, the intentional content is determined regardless of the perceiver's relation to a real object. In other words, the intentionalist seems to hold the view that our relation to real objects is inessential to the nature of perceptual experiences. Some philosophers, accordingly, point out that the intentionalist picture is bound to fail in capturing the central element of how we ordinarily conceive of perception in general, i.e., that real, mind-independent objects are present in our perceptual experiences.

Intentionalists, however, argue that their views can incorporate the element of "openness to the world". They insist that in our perceptual experiences things being perceived are still ordinary, mind-independent objects around us. Their idea is that we experience those objects directly, so there are no such intermediary entities as sense-data interposed between the perceiver and the object, while the real object being perceived is not literally *contained within the features of experiences*. I find this a bit mysterious, but those intentionalists advancing this line of response typically allege some similarity between perceptual representation and linguistic representation. They point out that how perceptual representations make us experience real objects around us is analogous to the

way linguistic representations do the job. There is a sense in which we can say that linguistic representations make us experience real objects around us, while those objects themselves are not literally contained in the features of linguistic representations, due to the fact that they, as physical things, cannot be contained in letters or sounds. And this seems to be the sense that intentionalists have in mind as the way perceptual representations work.[57]

2.4

The previous sections finally put me in a position to show that these standard views of perception have a tendency to make the inference that Burge talks about, i.e., the inference that has the fourth intuition operative in the Cartesian thought experiment as its premise and the individualistic picture of mind as its conclusion. The fourth intuition in question is that we could have perceptual experiences of the same kind, regardless of whether they are veridical, illusory or hallucinatory. From this intuition, Burge observes, individualists oftentimes make an unjustified inference deriving the following conclusion: perceptual experiences are independent, for their intentional natures, of the perceiver's environment.

In order to follow Burge's argument better, let us first of all examine whether the fourth intuition in the Cartesian thought experiment is indeed employed in the three standard views of perception. The three theories of perception are presented in the above as attempting to deal with the threat posed by the existence of illusion and hallucination to our ordinary conception of perception. Their attempts to resolve the threat itself can be taken to mean that they have already agreed with the fourth intuition. For the threat is based on the alleged fact that veridical perception and hallucination/illusion are experientially indistinguishable, which is exactly what the fourth intuition captures. The experiential indistinguishability is argued to challenge our ordinary view that we experience a physical, mind-independent object in a veridical perception. In brief, the experiential indistinguishability accepted by all three theories corresponds exactly to the fourth intuition.

---

[57] Millar, A. (1996) "The Idea of Experience", *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 97, pp. 75-90.

According to Burge, the aforementioned fourth intuition is used as the premise of one of the typical inferences in support of individualism, and the conclusion of the inference in question goes as follows: the intentional nature of perceptual experience is independent of the perceiver's environment. Now let us examine whether the standard theories of perception are indeed committed to this conclusion.

To begin with, the sense-data theory claims that we are indirectly aware of real, mind-independent objects in the world by virtue of directly perceiving sense-data. That is to say, sense-data are a sort of medium by means of which we come to be aware of the mind-independent, physical world. And what is crucial to understanding this theory is that a sense-datum is considered the *object* possessing the quality or feature of a perceptual experience. This is quite contrary to how we ordinarily conceive of the object of our perceptual experience. Our ordinary conception is that real, mind-independent, material things are the objects of our perceptual experiences, and also that they are the possessors of those qualities that we experience in perception. As discussed earlier, despite this deviance from our ordinary conception, the notion of sense-data has been advanced to make sense of the existence of hallucination and illusion in a way that is consistent with how the sense-data theorist views veridical perception. In sum, sense-data, not physical objects, are claimed to possess those qualities that I experience in perception, whether it is veridical, hallucinatory, or illusory. They are interposed between the material thing and the perceiver, as some sort of medium by means of which the perceiver comes to be indirectly aware of the material thing, and for this reason they are often referred to as "the veil of perception" by some objectors.

Now it becomes obvious that, according to the sense-data theory, "one's mental phenomena are in certain fundamental ways independent of the nature of the empirical and social worlds".[58] This does not mean that the sense-data theorist denies the fact that one's perceptual experience could have a certain *causal* relation with a material object. For example, the sense-data theorist may attempt to infer the characters of the material object from the character of the perceiver's sense-data experience, based on the assumption that the subjective experience is caused by a certain material object. However, notice that the sense-data theory does not make any difference when it comes

[58] Burge, p. 120.

to the perceptual or experienced content between hallucination, illusion and veridical perception. The perceptual content of a hallucination in which I perceive a dagger is identical to the perceptual content of a veridical perception in which I perceive a dagger, since in both cases the perceptual content is entirely determined by the sense-data which are alleged to be identical in the two cases. That is to say, the sense-data in question in each case cannot reflect the difference in the external world, i.e., the fact that there is no physical dagger in the case of hallucination while there is one in the case of veridical perception. Since the perceptual content is argued to be determined by the sense-data which has the above characteristic, now we can say that the sense-data theory is ultimately committed to the following view concerning the determination or individuation of perceptual content: the content of an individual's perceptual experience is entirely determined by what is internally going on in the individual's subjective experience, to be precise, the relevant sense-data being perceived.

This finally shows that the sense-data theory makes the individualistic inference that Burge talks about, i.e., the inference that starts with the fourth intuition in the Cartesian thought experiment and concludes with the individualistic picture of the mental. As examined, from the experiential indistinguishability between hallucination, illusion and veridical perception (i.e., the fourth intuition), the sense-data theory derives the conclusion that the intentional perceptual content is entirely determined to be what it is by the character of the subjective experience, to be precise, the sense-data being perceived.

How about the adverbial theory? The adverbial theorist argues that the content of an individual's perceptual experience is determined in terms of the specific state or manner of sensory awareness of the individual, that is, the modification of the experience itself. Now notice that the specific state or manner of sensing of the individual is completely intrinsic to the individual's subjective experience, just as sense-data are, and thus cannot reflect the characters of the individual's environment. For example, in both cases of my hallucination and veridical perception, say, of a brown square board, the specific states of my sensory awareness are alleged to be identical for both cases, namely, a "brownly and squarely" state. This way of characterization obviously cannot reflect the difference in my environment that there is no brown square board in the case of

hallucination while there is one in the case of veridical perception. In other words, the fact that there is no physical object in the case of hallucination is considered irrelevant in characterizing the specific manner of awareness. With this point, the adverbial theory maintains the sameness in the manner of sensing between veridical perception, hallucination and illusion.

Given this, now we can say that the same inference discussed in the case of the sense-data theory is also found in the adverbial theory, that is, the inference which starts with the fourth intuition in the Cartesian thought experiment and concludes with the individualistic picture of mental content. From the alleged experiential indistinguishability among veridical perception, hallucination and illusion, it derives the conclusion that the content of a perceptual experience is entirely determined by the specific mental state or manner of sensing the nature of which is independent of the perceiver's environment.

The intentionalist theory needs a bit closer examination than the above two. Does the intentionalist theory also lead to the individualistic picture of mental contents? Intentionalists in general hold that the intentional content of an experience determines the phenomenal character of the experience. And many of them also support the converse of the thesis, which claims that the phenomenology of an experience determines the intentional content. This sort of intentionalism sometimes takes the form of an identity claim that phenomenal properties are identical to intentional, representational properties (see Drestske, Tye, Carruthers and others[59]). And if the phenomenal character in this version is claimed to be captured purely in terms of non-intentional characterizations of the individual, then the thesis ultimately maintains that the intentional content of an experience is determined in complete independence of the individual's environment, which corresponds to the conclusion of the inference that Burge talks about.

---

[59] Dretske, F. (1995) *Naturalizing the Mind*, Cambridge: MIT Press.
Tye, M. (2000) *Consciousness, Color and Content*, Cambridge: MIT Press.
Carruthers, P. (2000) *Phenomenal Consciousness: A Naturalistic Theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
See also the following entry in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy.
Siegel, S. "The Contents of Perception", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2011 Edition), E. N. Zalta (ed.), forthcoming URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2011/entries/perception-contents/>.

However, it is not the case that every intentionalist theory involves this inference, for some hold an externalist view of the phenomenology of an experience. According to this view, intrinsic duplicates are not phenomenal duplicates on the ground that the phenomenology of an experience is determined partly by factors outside a subject's skin. Then, the intentionalist thesis that the phenomenal character determines the intentional content does not lead to the same conclusion of the inference under examination. In fact it leads to externalism about the intentional content. To sum up, *some* intentionalist views can be said to make the sort of individualistic inference that I found in the sense-data theory and the adverbial theory, while other intentionalists are in line with externalism. In a word, from the fourth intuition in the Cartesian thought experiment (i.e., the experiential indistinguishability among veridical perception, hallucination, and illusion), some intentionalists put forth the conclusion that the phenomenal character of an experience, which is an intrinsic data of the perceiver, determines the intentional content.

Some philosophers, such as McDowell, insist that the intentionalist theory of perception in general is fundamentally committed to the individualistic picture of mind. Recall the puzzle that the theory gives rise to in the previous section, i.e., the puzzle about how it can be said that we experience physical, mind-independent objects when they cannot be literally contained in our perceptual experiences. I talked briefly about the typical intentionalist way of solving this puzzle, but McDowell insists that the intentionalist theory of perception is as problematic as the sense-data theory, due to its not being able to do justice to our common conception that perceptions are "open to the world". Despite the intentionalist attempt to solve the puzzle, it is still hard to understand how the theory can maintain that we experience real objects, while alleging that our relation to them is inessential to the features of perceptual experiences. For this reason McDowell criticizes intentionalists for putting the mind "out of touch with reality"[60], and claims that there is in fact no difference between the sense-data theory's postulating the "veil of perception" and the intentionalist idea of "representation", in that our intuition of openness to the world is seriously undermined. McDowell thus concludes that the idea of intentionality in the intentional theory of perception loses the essence of genuine

[60] McDowell, J. (1987) "Singular Thought and the Extent of Inner Space", in J. McDowell and P. Pettit (eds.), *Subject, Thought, and Context*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 151.

perceptual intentionality, that is, the "aboutness" towards a real object, while leaving us at a loss as to "how it can be that experience, conceived from its own point of view, is not blank or blind, but purports to be revelatory of the world we live in."[61]

In this section, I showed that the sense-data theory, the adverbial theory, and some versions of the intentionalist theory of perception indeed make the individualistic inference that Burge finds to be grounded on the fourth intuition of the Cartesian thought experiment. Thus, from the intuition that genuine perceptions, illusions and hallucinations can all be experientially indistinguishable, those theories conclude that the nature or content of a perceptual experience is determined independently of the perceiver's environment. In other words, the sameness of sense-data or specific manner of sensing, or phenomenology, between two perceptual experiences, guarantees the sameness of intentional perceptual content. Now I will finally move on to discuss Burge's refutation of this individualistic inference.

2.5

Suppose there is an individual who normally perceives instances of a particular type of objective entity, say, shadows of a certain small size on a gently contoured surface, correctly as shadows.[62] That is to say, the individual sees shadows of the aforementioned sort regularly and correctly as shadows of the sort, and as a result his visual representations are properly explained and specified as shadow representations of the relevant sort. Imagine also that this person on very rare occasions encounters instances of another type of objective entity, say, a small sized crack, and sees them as shadows. Thus, the person on those few occasions *misperceives* cracks as shadows, and in fact has no disposition that would enable him to discriminate an instance of the crack type from an instance of the shadow type. And since the crack type and its instances are objective, we can say that the person's sensory modalities might be fooled.

---

[61] Ibid., p. 152.

[62] My presentation of the thought experiment found in Burge's "Individualism and Psychology" and "Cartesian Error and the Objectivity of Perception" may leave out some of his assumptions and fine points. See the following for his complete description of the thought experiment.
Burge, T. (1986) "Individualism and Psychology", *Philosophical Review* 95, pp. 3-45.
Burge, T. (1986) "Cartesian Error and the Objectivity of Perception", in J. McDowell and P. Pettit (eds.), *Subject, Thought, and Context*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 117-136.

Now Burge brings in a counterfactual situation in which the individual's physical states and discriminative abilities that can be specified non-intentionally and independently of the nature of the individual's environment are fixed constant as in the actual situation. What is different in this counterfactual situation is that, due to peculiar optical laws or effects, there are no visible shadows of the relevant sort, and in fact the optical laws are such that all the visual impressions caused by and explained in terms of the relevant sort of shadows in the actual situation are counterfactually caused by and explained in terms of the relevant sort of cracks. The cracks are where the shadows were in the actual case. In a word, there are no instances of the shadow type visible to the individual. We can further imagine that members of the individual's species in the counterfactual situation have all evolved to adapt to this no-shadow situation, and as a consequence, their physical movements and discriminative abilities are quite different from members of the actual situation. Only the protagonist in the counterfactual situation lacks those discriminative capacities that are "normal" for the people in the counterfactual case; his capacities are thus normal for the people in the actual case. In a word, our person is the only one whose non-intentionally specifiable aspects of the body remain constant in both actual and counterfactual cases, while all the other members of his species come to have different physical, discriminative capacities in the counterfactual case.

Now let us suppose that on those few occasions in the actual case in which the individual is confronted with cracks, the individual is counterfactually confronted with cracks as well. We need to keep in mind that everything about the individual that can be specified non-intentionally remains the same. Then in such a counterfactual situation, it can be said that the person would normally be visually representing small cracks as small cracks; that is to say, this individual's perceptual experience in the counterfactual situation is not a misperception, but is in fact veridical. Thus, while the individual's intentional perceptual state in the actual case can be described as seeing cracks as shadows, the intentional perceptual state of the identical individual in the counterfactual case can be described as seeing cracks as cracks. From this we can conclude that the individual's intentional perceptual states differ between the actual and counterfactual cases. And since everything that can be non-intentionally specifiable about the individual,

such as his physical states, discriminative abilities, brain states, phenomenological states, sensory intakes, etc., are identical for both cases, this thought experiment shows that the person's intentional perceptual states are not individualistically individuated.

With this thought experiment, Burge argues that the fourth intuition in the Cartesian thought experiment does not justifiably lead to individualism, just as the three previous intuitions do not. The first intuition is that different causal antecedents could issue the same physical effects on the individual's body; the second is that one could be drastically wrong about the nature of the empirical world around one; according to the third, one has a direct and authoritative access to the contents of one's own occurent thoughts. Regarding these, Burge showed that the individualistic picture of the mental needs more justifications beyond what these three intuitions provide. Finally, the fourth intuition is the idea of experiential indistinguishability among veridical perception, illusion and hallucination. Before examining Burge's rejection of the individualistic inference based on the fourth intuition, I showed that three standard views of perception, i.e., the sense-data theory, the adverbial theory, and some versions of the intentionalist theory of perception, are indeed committed to the inference in question. After this, I presented Burge's thought experiment which is intended to show that the fourth intuition, the most basic and primitive among the four intuitions, does not lead to individualism either.

I will come back to this discussion in a later chapter in which I argue that two major aesthetic theories in the 19th and 20th centuries, i.e., aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience, can be seen as making the very inference found in the standard views of perception. In a word, those aesthetic theories will be shown to make the individualistic inference based on the fourth intuition in the Cartesian thought experiment. Thus, what I plan to do after this chapter is to change my topic from the debate between individualism and externalism in the philosophy of mind to aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience. I will start by showing that these aesthetic theories are committed to a version of psychological individualism. After this, in discussing what sort of intuition is behind them, I will come back to the point I have made in this chapter and argue that the individualistic inference making use of the fourth intuition is also found in these aesthetic theories.

3. Aesthetic Formalism as Committed to Psychological Individualism

So far I have examined the debate between psychological individualism and externalism in the philosophy of mind, and now will turn my focus to aesthetic formalism, one of the most influential and predominant theories of art criticism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, intending to show that it is committed to a form of *psychological individualism*, thus incompatible with psychological externalism.

Aesthetic formalism, which can be found in the activities of both art critics and ordinary appreciators equally regarding the question of how to appreciate works of art, maintains that what matters aesthetically in appreciating works of art are formal qualities such as colors, tones, textures, shapes, structures, and so on. Historically, the foundational ideas of aesthetic formalism were conceived by modern philosophers such as Hume and Kant, whose goal was to establish aesthetics as a discipline "independent" of other areas of philosophy. They believed that what they took to be the human faculty governing aesthetic judgments, namely, "taste", is one with its own unique functions distinguished from those of other faculties, and this led them to the view that a special discipline devoted to investigate the nature of aesthetic matters exclusively is needed.

Such philosophical ideas came to be embodied in the principles and criteria of a theory of art criticism called aesthetic formalism, which was initiated by a group of 19th and 20th centuries authors such as Clive Bell, Clement Greenberg, and Eduard Hanslick. Their goal was to purge from appreciation or criticism of works of art what they believe to be "extraneous" considerations, such as representational subject matters, historical or social backgrounds in which the work is embedded, our tendency to view the work as a means to achieve, say, political, religious, or moral goals, or our relying upon the biographical information of the author, and so on. They believe that purging those factors will provide a better or more correct way to appreciate works of art. For example, Bell in his *Art* claims that the representational subject matter is aesthetically irrelevant, for it does not provoke in us what he calls "aesthetic emotions", but at best can be used as a means of conveying information or suggesting emotions other than "aesthetic" ones.[63]

[63] Bell, C. (1914) *Art,* London: Chatto and Windus.

For example, Frith's *Paddington Station* is not a work of art, but an interesting "document recounting anecdotes, manners and customs of the age". Paintings such as *The Doctors* by Sir Luke Fildes are not works of art either, for they only suggest sentimental emotions, aiming to teach us moral lessons, instead of stirring "aesthetic emotions". According to Bell, the problem of representational subject matters in works of art is not that they are harmful but that they are simply *irrelevant*. In the same vein, paintings such as those by the Italian Futurists are not works of art, since they are intended to promote certain political, social agendas of the artists. A painting cannot be a work of art if it is merely used as a means of satisfying some "ulterior" purposes than the "aesthetic" one, argues the formalist.

According to Bell, what makes a work of art and what we need to focus on in appreciating it should be entirely found in the work itself, not being related to outside life. Representational subject matters, particular emotions, social, political, religious purposes, historical, social background in which the work is embedded, the author's biographical information and so on are all claimed to be "parts of life", thus are "outside" works of art. Only formal qualities such as colors, lines, shapes, positioning of figures and so on can be said to be "in*"* a work of art. Now let me roughly characterize this overall attitude which seems to tie all formalist theories together.

> In order to appreciate works of art properly we should avoid taking into account "extraneous" factors such as the author's intention, historical background in which the work is embedded, representational subject matters, etc., but focus on formal qualities only such as colors, lines, tones, structures, etc., for either considering the "extraneous factors" means that the work is used for some ulterior purposes than the "aesthetic" one, or the "extraneous" factors are aesthetically irrelevant.

Let me call this IC (initial characterization of aesthetic formalism)**.** We can come up with different characterizations depending on which specific formalist theory is under examination, but I believe that IC captures the core intent of most formalist theories sufficiently so that we can get some basic ideas to start with. One thing to notice is that the formalist idea summarized thereby consists of a normative claim (i.e., we should focus on formal qualities only) and two supporting reasons. In the following sections, I will first of all find *two versions* of aesthetic formalism taken from IC, and then show that

one version creates a direct conflict with psychological externalism, the philosophical implication of which will be discussed in a later chapter.

3.1

The first version of formalism I find in IC is this: In order to appreciate works of art properly we should avoid taking into account "extraneous" factors but focus on formal qualities only, for not doing so means that works of art are used to satisfy ulterior purposes (e.g., political, religious, emotional, educational, etc.) than the aesthetic one.

What I want to point out to begin with is that this version makes use of the *first reason* in IC, which is normative in character. Why is the first reason normative? For it says that using works of art for "ulterior purposes" is not desirable. Why it is not desirable is not clearly spelled out in this rough characterization, but a quick glance at any formalist theory will tell you that, for the formalist, associating a work of art with purposes other than the "aesthetic" one is likely to produce an impure, diluted, or less valuable aesthetic experience, which is not a desirable thing to pursue.[64] In the following quote, Bell contrasts valuable aesthetic experiences which we get from focusing on formal qualities with undesirable aesthetic experiences.

> They know that they are in the presence of something great, but they lack the power of apprehending it…And so they read into the forms of the work those facts and ideas for which they are capable of feeling emotion, and feel for them the emotions that they can feel – the ordinary emotions of life. When confronted by a picture, instinctively they refer back its forms to the world from which they came….Instead of going out on the stream of art into a new world of aesthetic experience, they turn a sharp corner and come straight home to the world of human interests….A good work of visual art carries a person who is capable of appreciating it out of life into ecstasy…You will notice that people who cannot feel *pure aesthetic emotions* remember picture by their subjects; whereas people who can, as often as not, have no idea what the subject of a picture is…They are concerned only with lines and colors, their relations and quantities and qualities; but from these they win an emotion *more profound and far more sublime* than any that can be given by the description of facts and ideas. (my italics)[65]

[64] Formalists do not spell out explicitly what an "aesthetic" purpose is for them, but the basic idea I find in their discussion is that approaching a work of art with an aesthetic purpose in mind is to appreciate the *perceptual qualities* of a work.
[65] Bell, pp. 107-108.

Bell's point here is clear: we can have more profound, sublime, and pure aesthetic experiences only when we focus on formal qualities. In sum, the first reason in IC is normative in that it claims that there are aesthetic experiences that we ought to pursue due to their being more valuable than others. Given this understanding, the first version of aesthetic formalism can be seen as consisting of a normative proposal (i.e., we should focus on formal qualities only) supported by a justification of normative kind (i.e., it is desirable to satisfy the aesthetic purpose than other purposes in appreciating works of art).

When aesthetic formalism is interpreted this way, we can say that it is some sort of *suggestion* or *recommendation,* intended to help us have better aesthetic experiences. It encourages us to focus on formal qualities, telling us that it will give us a better, enriched, or pure aesthetic experience. It attempts to bring our attention to what we sometimes tend to miss, due to being caught up with our own passion, desire, prejudice and so on, that the *perceptual qualities of a work of art deserve to be appreciated for what they are*. And I believe that the value and insight of this line of aesthetic formalism can hardly be denied, if we are interested in enjoying works of art and thus open-minded towards any guidelines for better aesthetic experiences. Whether the resulting experiences are indeed better or should be considered better may lead to its own discussion, but it can be accepted without question that this line of aesthetic formalism provides us with a piece of advice that is worth keeping in mind. In fact, some would even find it almost trivial or redundant as an aesthetic proposal; of course a work of art deserves to be appreciated for its perceptual qualities. For example, a religious painting impresses us not just because it is used as a means to convey a certain religious message but also because of how it is painted.

Let me call this version of aesthetic formalism, *advisory aesthetic formalism.* What I want to make clear before moving on to the next version is that this kind is not what I will deal with in this dissertation. Of course I believe that we can have a critical discussion about it, for instance, by examining whether its advice really works or whether there are better advices and so forth. However, such a project is not my interest, for I think that the project does not provide much to talk about philosophically. If we interpret aesthetic formalism as some sort of guideline, advice, or recommendation, then it is very hard to deny certain values that it might have to those who are intent on improving their

aesthetic experiences. Some might argue, regarding this, that it is the very value of the advice that should be critically discussed and questioned concerning aesthetic formalism. In fact, quite a number of art critics, historians, and theorists have criticized advisory aesthetic formalism by suggesting better guidelines for our aesthetic appreciations, which I believe is a meaningful project and deserves a serious discussion of its own. However, I believe that it is more of a project of art criticism or education than of philosophy, and hence I will not dwell on it here.

3.2

Now let me turn to the *second reason* in IC. The formalist proposal supported by the second reason forms the following version of aesthetic formalism: We should focus on formal qualities only because no qualities other than those are aesthetically relevant**.**

It is apparent, especially when compared to the first version, that this argument cannot simply be considered some sort of guideline or recommendation for having better aesthetic experiences. The normative formalist proposal (i.e., we should focus on formal qualities) is now supported by a *descriptive* statement that only formal qualities are aesthetically relevant, and this justifiably leads us to question the truth of the statement. Since the second reason claims to describe a fact about the world the truth of which can be supported by evidence, I find this line of argument philosophically interesting, unlike the first version of aesthetic formalism.

So what we have to examine now is why formalists believe that only formal qualities are aesthetically relevant, which cannot be answered without firstly clarifying what makes a quality aesthetically relevant according to their view. "Aesthetically relevant quality" is one of the most frequently discussed topics among formalists, and although its fine points can differ from theory to theory, the following general picture is sufficient to present the shared elements in various formalist theories.

In order for a quality to be aesthetically relevant, formalists believe that we should be able to perceive or sense it *without the help of what they take to be "non-aesthetic" or "extraneous" factors* such as the author's intention, historical background of the work, biographical information of the author, knowledge about the subject matter depicted, etc.

The formalist reasoning in excluding these factors, classifying them as "extraneous", is that they cannot be found "in" the work itself. Then what is wrong with their not being "in" the work? Why are they considered "non-aesthetic"? Why is a quality non-aesthetic if perceiving it requires some help from such factors? According to the formalist, if a quality is not discoverable simply by examining the work itself but requires some sort of knowledge or facts about the work, then it means that the quality appeals to something other than our sensory faculties (vision, hearing, etc.), consequently to such faculties as understanding or reason. And formalists are doubtful about how a quality can be aesthetic if it requires more than what is "given" to our sensory or perceptual apparatus.

Let me briefly explain this last statement. It is based on the idea that what is the aesthetic of an object is its perceptual quality appealing to our eye or ear, which you might think is just so evidently true that there is nothing special to talk about the formalist's using it in their notion of aesthetically relevant qualities. However, the history of western aesthetics shows that the idea became predominant only after the advent of modern aesthetics, and therefore the formalist view of aesthetically relevant qualities based on it can also be said to be a characteristically modern view. A brief look at the history of western philosophy will provide a plenty of examples in which non-perceptible features of an object were widely mentioned by ancient and medieval thinkers as aesthetic properties of an object, which was by no means a metaphorical way of talking but the literal notion of the aesthetic at that time. And this attitude went through a drastic change with the advent of modern aesthetics.

Modern philosophers hardly mentioned non-perceptible things in their discussions of the aesthetic. The previous attitude was still found in those topics in which "the aesthetic" was used to capture the *non-perceptible* elegance, flawlessness, excellence, or precision and the like (e.g., the aesthetic aspect of a mathematical proof). However, "the aesthetic" in this sense was far from what modern philosophers such as Hume and Kant had in mind. In contrast with ancient and medieval philosophers, they started discussing the aesthetic of an object purely in terms of *perceptible qualities appealing to our sensory faculties*. In a word, the idea that the aesthetic features of an object are some of its perceptual qualities hardly interested ancient and medieval philosophers, but became the center of discussion in the modern period.

I believe that this new attitude of modern aesthetics provided the fundamental basis for the formalist notion of aesthetically relevant qualities, which claims that an aesthetically relevant quality is such that we can discover it simply by examining the work itself *with the help of our sensory, perceptual capacities and without the help of outside sources.*

3.3

Another view that formalists seem to have in mind as the notion of aesthetically relevant qualities, besides the abovementioned one that they are discoverable "in" works of art , is that aesthetically relevant qualities are qualities "directly" presented to our perception or qualities that we can be "directly" aware of. Compared to the previous view, regarding which formalists at least provide some sort of list or clue as to what are "in" or "outside" works of art, the second view which is centered on the notion of "direct awareness" may sound quite obscure due to the lack of sufficient explanation from formalists. Despite this difficulty, I think that my characterization in the following captures what they have in mind.

What formalists have in mind when they talk about "direct awareness" seems to be that we do not make use of *inferences* or *conjectures* in perceiving aesthetically relevant qualities. This is a slightly different way of looking at aesthetically relevant qualities compared to the previous one in that the previous one focuses more on not making use of *outside sources* or *evidence* that cannot be located in the work itself. We can understand them as two ways of conceiving aesthetically relevant qualities with different emphasis, not as two different concepts or definitions of aesthetically relevant qualities.

The formalist talk of "direct awareness" seems to suggest that some qualities are presented to our perception in such a way that anyone with normal perceptual capacities under normal conditions of perception can "immediately" discern without using any inference or conjecture.[66] And according to the formalist, only such qualities are

[66] "Immediacy" here has nothing to do with how long a perception takes. Perception and inference are contrasted in this characterization as two ways of grasping qualities, and thus "immediacy" as a characteristic of perception should be understood in the context of the contrast. The sense of "immediacy"

aesthetically relevant. Again, the justification that the formalist uses in support of this view incorporates the attitude held distinctively by modern philosophers towards aesthetic matters, i.e., the aesthetic quality of an object is something to be perceived, sensed, or appreciated with our eyes or ears, and it is of little significance to talk about whether non-perceptible things are aesthetic or not. Thus, according to the formalist, if any sort of inference is used to detect a certain quality, it means that the quality is not perceptually presented or available to us, and thus cannot be an aesthetic quality.

What things satisfy this "direct awareness" requirement, according to the formalist, are formal qualities such as colors, shapes, lines, structures, etc., and consequently they are aesthetically relevant. It is true that people might differ in their capacity of vision or hearing, but according to the formalist, there are qualities in a work of art such that it is safe enough to say that everyone has, more or less, equal access to, e.g., redness, roundness, high-pitched sounds, and so on; these are qualities that seem to be discoverable without using inference or conjecture. Reminding ourselves of the sense-data theory may help us understand the notion of "direct awareness" in question. In the sense-data theory, the way that we are acquainted with sense-data is described as our being directly aware of them or their being directly presented to us, and it is noticeable that what the formalist has in mind as the way we grasp formal qualities is similar to such a way.[67]

However, this does not mean that seeing formal qualities, say, redness, is perfectly possible without any sort of cultural training. Seeing a certain range of wave lengths as redness requires some cultural training, and different cultural trainings sometimes result in different color perspective. Nor does it mean that seeing formal qualities always takes place instantly at the very moment of encountering an object. In order to hear the structure of a musical piece we oftentimes have to listen to it multiple times; we may have to listen with more attention or longer, for what sounds like a series of unrelated notes at first becomes clearer presenting its structure to us only after multiple listenings.

---

in the following statement, "I do not have to infer the red color of the strawberries. I can immediately perceive it", is the one being used in this characterization of aesthetically relevant qualities.

[67] See chapter 2 for my discussion of the sense-data theory.

However, despite the fact that it may require some sort of cultural training or multiple experiences, formalists can still say that aesthetically relevant qualities are discoverable simply by examining the work itself if they are discoverable at all and *no inference is required*. Even if you fail to notice a certain formal quality of an object, the formalist suggestion is simply to look at it or hear it *closely again and again, getting rid of all the distracting thoughts or your personal interests,* until you finally come to see or hear it. They might try to point out the quality in question to you, saying something along the lines of "Look at this corner! Can't you see the round figure there?" The following quote by a musical formalist Eduard Hanslick in which he attempts to help us hear what is aesthetically relevant shows such a tendency clearly.

> How music is able to produce beautiful forms without a specific feeling as its content is already to some extent illustrated for us by a branch of ornamentation in the visual arts, namely arabesque. We follow sweeping lines, here dipping gently, there boldly soaring, approaching and separating, corresponding curves large and small, seemingly incommensurable yet always well connected together….Now let us think of an arabesque not dead and static, but coming into being in continuous self-formation before our eyes…How they ascend from a small curve to great heights and then sink back again, how they expand and contract and forever astonish the eye with their ingenious alteration of tension and repose!.... Does this mental impression not come close to that of music?[68]

Here he directs our attention to such things as "how they ascend from a small curve to great heights and then sink back again, how they expand and contract" and so forth, believing that they are aesthetically relevant. And notice the manner in which he points out or directs our attention to those qualities. He does not make any inference from one quality to another, but simply lists those qualities as if they are discoverable in virtue of our having normal perceptual capacities. In a word, this quote gives support to the second notion of aesthetically relevant qualities which says that they are qualities we can be aware of without using inference.

An aesthetic supervenience theorist, Frank Sibley, whose theory will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, also provides similar advice so as to guide us to perceive aesthetic qualities. Even though he did not participate in the formalist movement in art

---

[68] Hanslick, E. (1891) *On the Musically Beautiful*, trans. and ed. by G. Payzant (1986), Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, p. 29.

criticism, I believe that his theory of aesthetic supervenience shares an essential assumption with aesthetic formalism, which will also be discussed in due course, and for this reason his advice is in line with Hanslick's. Here are some of the methods he finds effective in making someone perceive the aesthetic qualities of an object.

> We may simply mention or point out non-aesthetic features[69]: "Notice these flecks of colors, that dark mass there, those lines." By merely drawing attention to those *easily discernible features* which make the painting luminous or warm or dynamic, we often succeed in bringing someone to see these aesthetic qualities…Sometimes in doing this we are drawing attention to features which may have gone unnoticed by an untrained or insufficiently attentive eye or ear: "Just listen for the repeated figure in the left hand"…Sometimes they are features which have been seen or heard but of which the significance or purpose has been missed in any of a variety of ways: "Notice how much darker he has made the central figure, how much brighter these colors are than the adjacent ones". In mentioning *features which may be discerned by anyone with normal eyes, ears, and intelligence*, we are singling out what may serve as a kind of key to grasping or seeing something else.[70] (my italics)

Just as Hanslick suggests, Sibley believes that anyone with normal perceptual capacities can discover aesthetic qualities if they give careful, sufficient attentions to the object. Consequently, the methods he suggests are mainly to direct our attention to the right places or to have our attentions more focused.

To sum up, the formalist notion of aesthetically relevant qualities based on the notion of "direct awareness" is that they are qualities grasping of which only requires our careful employment of normal perceptual capacities. Their advice in the above clearly shows that their goal is to help us *perceive* or *experience* aesthetically relevant qualities for ourselves, and it is in this context that "direct awareness" should be understood; aesthetically relevant qualities are "directly" presented to us in the sense that we can grasp them without using any inference or conjecture. And finally, according to formalists, formal qualities satisfy this requirement and thus they are aesthetically relevant.

---

[69] Sibley uses the term "non-aesthetic features" to refer to formal qualities.

[70] According to Sibley, aesthetic qualities are such that "taste" or "sensitivity" is required in order to perceive them. He gives us the following list as examples of aesthetic qualities: unified, balanced, integrated, lifeless, serene, somber, dynamic, powerful, vivid, delicate, moving, etc. More discussion about this can be found in the next chapter.

Let me wrap up my discussion so far. The notion of aesthetically relevant qualities is a crucial element in the formalist argument which makes use of the second reason in IC, and the notion can be characterized in the abovementioned two ways. Firstly, an aesthetically relevant quality is such that we can discover it simply by examining the work itself *with the help of our sensory capacities and without the help of outside sources.* Another way of conceiving it is that it is a quality presented to our perception in such a way that anyone with normal perceptual abilities and under normal conditions can easily discern it *in virtue of our sensory capacities and without using inferences.*

In Kendall Walton's seminal paper in which he attempts to refute aesthetic formalism by arguing that non-perceptible properties of an object (such as the category of the object, e.g., painting, sculpture, movies, piano music, etc.) can affect our perceptual experiences in a significant way, he characterizes aesthetic formalism as committed to the following view. His understanding coincides with my formulation of the second version, and thus I close this section with the following quote from him.

> (According to the formalist) Surely (it seems) a Rembrandt portrait does not have (or lack) a sense of mystery in virtue of the fact that Rembrandt intended it to have (or to lack) that quality, any more than a contractor's intention to make a roof leakproof makes it so; nor is the portrait mysterious in virtue of any other facts about what Rembrandt thought or how he went about painting the portrait or what his society happened to be like. Such circumstances are important to the result only in so far as they had an effect on the pattern of paint splotches that became attached to the canvas, and the canvas can be examined without any way considering how the splotches got there. It would not matter in the least to the aesthetic properties of the portrait if the paint had been applied to the canvas not by Rembrandt at all, but by a chimpanzee or a cyclone in a paint shop.[71]

3.4

However, a case like the following raises a question whether formal qualities exhaust all that can be perceived in the above ways. Let me take Goya's *The Third of May 1808* for example. The formalist would say that what are aesthetically relevant in the painting are its colors, shapes, positioning of figures and so on, for they seem to be the qualities which

[71] Walton, K. (1970) "Categories of Art", *Philosophical Review* 79, p. 336.

are “in” the work itself or “directly” presented to our perception in the sense described above; neither outside source nor inference seems to be required in perceiving them. However, looking at the painting, we might legitimately wonder whether its colors, shapes and so on are all and only that can be considered satisfying the above requirements; are they the only qualities that are ascertainable by examining the work itself? What about “harshness”? Do we not oftentimes say that the painting *looks* harsh, or that we *perceive* it as harsh, implying that we experience something in the painting?

If “harshness” can be seen in this way, i.e., some sort of perceptible quality in the painting, it seems that I experience “harshness” along with other formal qualities, while hardly feeling any phenomenological or experiential differences between the way I perceive it and the way I perceive red or yellow color in the painting; in other words, I do not seem to rely on some sort of inference in experiencing “harshness”, nor does it seem that I had to learn some facts about the historical background of the work in order to perceive it for myself. With respect to these two ways, there seems to be no experiential difference between the way I perceive “redness” and the way I perceive “harshness” in the painting. And this also seems to be the case with qualities such as “serene”, “cheerful”, “lurid”, “calm” and so on, which are often mentioned as something we perceive or experience in works of art. In other words, these qualities also seem to be perceived in the alleged two ways that the formalist speaks of concerning formal qualities. Thus it now appears that such qualities can also satisfy the formalist criteria of aesthetically relevant qualities, and this leads to the conclusion that they are aesthetically relevant qualities as well.

Then how would formalists respond to this, that is, their theory seems to imply that such qualities are as aesthetically relevant as formal qualities? My view is that they do not have any problem with it. In fact, in their essays or reviews of works of art, most of their examples already make use of both formal qualities and the sort of qualities like “harshness” to describe works of art. Their aesthetic remarks seldom look like the following: “This sculpture is aesthetically pleasing because it has a long curve and is painted with light purple color”. Even though both “long curve” and “painted with light purple color” are aesthetically relevant, using them alone only makes the statement sound absurd. Instead, they opt for, “This sculpture is aesthetically pleasing because of its

elegance which comes from its having *a long curve* and being *painted with light purple color*".

The point I want to make with these examples is that the formalist taking interest in formal qualities is not to simply argue that they are the only aesthetically relevant qualities, but to argue that *an aesthetic judgment or perception is the one that is based on formal qualities only*. (This is a rough characterization of their idea, which will be refined later in due course.) What they have in mind is this: if our perception or judgment that the sculpture is elegant is not entirely decided by our perception of its formal qualities, then it is not an aesthetic judgment but something else, and accordingly the quality "elegance" is not an aesthetically relevant quality in this particular case.

A slightly different way of explaining this may be helpful. The formalist has just explained why formal qualities are aesthetically relevant. And now, facing a quality which is perceptible but not a formal quality itself (e.g., harshness), the formalist can decide the status of this quality, that is, whether it is aesthetically relevant or not, by looking at where it comes from. And it is when our perception of harshness can be explained in terms of our perception of formal qualities, qualities that formalists have already shown to be aesthetically relevant, that formalists come to determine that the "harshness" of the painting is an *aesthetically relevant quality* as well, and our judgment that the painting is harsh is an *aesthetic judgment*. The formalist may oppose to the idea that the quality "harshness" is aesthetically relevant in all cases, but will say that it certainly is so when our perceptual experience of it is decided by our perceptual experience of the relevant formal qualities.

It is at this point that the formalist argument based on the second reason in IC reveals an essential distinction which is not obvious to us at first glance. Initially, the argument in question seems to simply say that only formal qualities are aesthetically relevant. However, facing the case in which we seem to experience "harshness" from Goya's *The Third of May1808*, formalists explain it by pointing out the combination of red and yellow colors as seen on the canvas. But why do we perceive "harshness" instead of "warm", "optimistic", "cozy" and so on from such a combination? Couldn't it be partially due to the fact that our recognizing the subject matter of the painting as a killing scene affects our perceptual experience? How about this example? Suppose that you face

a painting in which a spring field is depicted in such colors as yellow, green, pink and the like in soft tones, and after hearing that the painter was heartbroken at the time of working on it, you might say that the painting is "bittersweet", "despondent", "forlorn", etc.

How can the formalist respond to the above examples? The formalist can respond to the first case by saying the following. If you make a judgment that it is harsh based on your recognition of the killing scene, then it cannot be said that you perceive or experience "harshness" but *attribute* "harshness" to the painting. Only when your judgment that the painting is harsh depends on your perception of certain formal qualities, it can be said that you perceive "harshness", argues the formalist. Regarding the second case, the formalist can respond in the same vein by making it clear that you *attribute* "bittersweet" to the painting instead of perceiving it. And they would also point out that the qualities you *will perceive* if you focus on formal qualities only are different from "bittersweet"; you will perceive qualities such as "blithe", "cheerful" and the like. It is due to your use of the outside information (i.e., the painter was heartbroken) that you come to attribute, not perceive or experience, "bittersweet".

3.5

I find that this distinction between attribution and perceptual experience has not been given enough attention in the discussion of aesthetic formalism by other authors, and I want to emphasize that the distinction plays an essential role not only in aesthetic formalism but also in two other groups of aesthetic theories that I plan to examine later, i.e., the theory of aesthetic supervenience and the aesthetic theories of modern philosophers. The lack of discussion about the distinction may be the result of the fact that formalists themselves are not explicit about their making such a distinction. However, I believe that the way they explain the so-called "impure" aesthetic experiences evidently shows the essential role of the distinction in formalism. And this implicit distinction becomes completely explicit in the theory of aesthetic supervenience. From the beginning of their discussion, aesthetic supervenience theorists make it clear that they will distinguish *judgments with the relevant perceptual experiences* from *judgments without*

them (i.e., attribution of aesthetic qualities). In the following quote from an aesthetic supervenience theorist, Sibley, whose view I will examine more closely in the next chapter, we can clearly see that for him aesthetic judgments only mean *judgments within perceptions.*

> It is of importance to note, broadly speaking, aesthetics deals with a kind of perception. People have to see the grace or unity of a work, hear the plaintiveness or frenzy in the music..... Unless they do perceive them for themselves, aesthetic enjoyment, appreciation, and judgment are beyond them. Merely to learn from others, on good authority, that the music is serene, the play moving, or the picture unbalanced is of little aesthetic value; the crucial thing is to see, hear, or feel. *To suppose indeed that one can make aesthetic judgments without aesthetic perception*, say, by following rules of some kind, is to misunderstand aesthetic judgment. (my italics)
>
> This therefore is how I shall use "aesthetic judgment" throughout. Where there is no question of aesthetic perception, I shall use some other expression like "attribution of aesthetic quality" or "aesthetic statement". Thus, rather as a color-blind man may infer that something is green without seeing that it is, and rather as a man, without seeing a joke himself, may say that something is funny because others laugh, so someone may attribute balance or gaudiness to a painting, or say that it is too pale, without himself having judged it so.[72]

Thus, whenever he talks about "aesthetic judgments" he always means judgments within perceptions of the relevant qualities, while denying that those judgments without perception deserve the same title. They should rather be called "attribution of aesthetic quality" or "aesthetic statement". Following Sibley, major aesthetic supervenience theorists in general make it clear that they are not interested in the latter kind of judgments, which I will discuss in detail in the next chapter.

The main reason for them to maintain such a view, as Sibley himself points out in the above quote, is that they think it is nonsense to talk about "aesthetic" judgments, unless it is implied that we make the judgments via perceiving the aesthetic qualities in question for ourselves. Any judgment made independently of perception, sensing, experiencing and the like has no standing in the discussion of aesthetic judgments. This attitude is adopted by other aesthetic supervenience theorists as basis of their discussion,

[72] Sibley, F. (1965) "Aesthetic and Nonaesthetic", *Philosophical Review* 74, p. 137.

and my view on aesthetic formalists at this point is that they also have the same attitude, even though they do not explicitly state that they have such a distinction in mind.

For example, the musical formalist Hanslick argues that music can "whisper", "rage", "rustle", but can never convey a specific feeling or emotional state such as "love", "anger", "courage", "piety" and etc. His argument is that the former sort can emerge simply from such things as "audible changes in strength, motion, and proportion", while the latter sort can only occur by being related to something like "ideas, judgments, and thoughts". And I think the distinction I made in the above can be aptly applied to Hanslick's idea in the following way. According to him, when we listen to a piece of music and judge it to *rage*, it is an aesthetic judgment; for our *perception* of it as raging comes from our *perception* of audible things such as increase and diminishing of the volume, acceleration and deceleration of the speed and the like. On the other hand, if we listen to the same piece and judge it to be *angry*, then it is not an aesthetic judgment but an attribution of the aesthetic quality. For, according to him, it is not likely that we can experience "anger" by virtue of simply sensing audible changes. Thus, the correct way to describe this case is that we *attribute* "anger" to the music by relating it to some "ideas, judgments and thoughts" outside the music.[73]

Another formalist, Bell, also makes a comparison similar to the distinction in question. He compares his appreciation of music when he has a "clean palate" and when he reads into it the "ideas of life". He says that when his palate is clean his experience of music is purely aesthetic, even though it may be humble. In those moments, he says that he can appreciate "music as pure musical form, as sounds combined according to the laws of mysterious necessity, as pure art with a tremendous significance of its own and no relation whatever to the significance of life". However, when he loses his "clean palate" because of his getting tired or perplexed, he lets slip his sense of form and "begin to read into the musical forms human emotions of terror and mystery, love and hate".[74] Again, it can be said that his comparison is in line with the distinction under discussion. Only those judgments in the scope of the former way of appreciation deserve to be called "aesthetic judgment", while the latter kind is simply "attribution of aesthetic qualities".

---

[73] Hanslick, *On the Musically Beautiful*, pp. 8-10.
[74] Bell, pp. 108-109.

According to his example, we may judge that the music is terrifying but should be careful about describing such a judgment: we should say that we *attribute* "terror" to the music by reading into it the "ideas of life", instead of saying that we *perceive* "terror" for ourselves by virtue of perceiving its formal qualities alone.

In sum, I find that this distinction between *aesthetic judgments* and *attributions of aesthetic qualities* has not been noticed or given enough attention so far by other authors in discussing aesthetic formalism. I will take the distinction to be essential in aesthetic formalism, and thus take it into account in constructing my argument that aesthetic formalism is committed to a version of psychological individualism.

3.6

Let us recall the second version of aesthetic formalism taken from IC: We should focus on formal qualities only because no other qualities than those are aesthetically relevant. And now I am finally in a position to show that this is committed to a version of *psychological individualism*, due to the assumption that it is based on.

Let me call the sort of qualities such as "vividness", "serenity", "cheerfulness" etc. second-order aesthetic qualities and "redness", "roundness", "high-pitchedness" etc. first-order aesthetic qualities. Then my discussion so far shows that there is an assumption in the second version of aesthetic formalism which can be formulated as the following: *our aesthetic judgment (i.e., judgment with the relevant perception) of a work of art that it has a certain second-order aesthetic quality depends only on our perceiving the first-order aesthetic qualities of the work.*

This is an individualistic assumption claiming that the content of an individual's second-order aesthetic judgment is entirely determined by what is internally going on within the individual, specifically, the visual images, phenomenal or physical states, sensory intakes of first-order aesthetic qualities etc., in such a way that changes in the environment that do not provide for a change in the inner state cannot bring about a change in the individual's mental content about second-order aesthetic quality. In other words, if two particle for particle identical individuals have the same perceptual experience of first-order aesthetic qualities in the sense that what can be non-intentionally

described about their perceptual experiences are identical, then they will make the same second-order aesthetic judgments, that is to say, the contents of their second-order aesthetic judgments will be the same.

As a view based on this individualistic assumption, the second version of formalism now turns out to be in a *direct conflict with the externalist picture* of mental contents. Thus, unlike the first version of formalism, which is basically some sort of guideline as to how to improve our appreciation of works of art, the second version leads us to serious and interesting philosophical questions. Let me now call the second version *psychological aesthetic formalism*. What I am planning to show in the following chapters is that the individualistic assumption in question concerning the nature of the relation between perceptions of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities is used not just in aesthetic formalism but also in the theory of aesthetic supervenience, and that the sort of individualism in these two theories is closely related to the sort of individualism in modern aesthetics. Due to the individualistic assumption used, aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience are in a direct conflict with the externalist picture of the mental that has been acknowledged to do justice to ways in which we characterize mental contents. The point of discussing this conflict, however, is not simply to show that they are implausible theories of art, but to have an in-depth look at the nature of those aesthetic theories that the recognition of the conflict enables us notice.

The conflict between these aesthetic theories and the externalist picture of mental contents has not been noticed or discussed by others, mainly due to the fact that psychological individualism itself became noticeable as a particular picture of the mental only after the recent appearance of psychological externalism. This recently recognized conflict then gives rise to the question of why these aesthetic theories consistently make use of only one picture of the mental in the opposition of individualism and externalism. And this seems to suggest that there is something intuitive about the individualistic assumption used in the aesthetic theories; in other words, some of our deep-seated intuitions seem to be well integrated with the individualistic assumption operative in the aesthetic theories in question. In brief, my examination of aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience in light of this recently recognized opposition of

externalism and individualism in the philosophy of mind is not simply to refute them, but to reveal certain insightful aspects of them.

I will turn to this topic in due course, but what I want to make clear at this point is that psychological aesthetic formalism is what I will be focusing on in the dissertation, and that it is the sort of formalism that most formalist theories are committed to. The first version, advisory formalism, is also found in most formalist theories, for formalist theories in general are mixtures of both versions, but as I have already mentioned, it will not be dealt with here because of its lack of philosophical relevance.

3.7

Some might say that the above assumption I find hidden in the second version of aesthetic formalism can be interpreted in ways that are not psychological in character and consequently do not conflict with psychological externalism. One way is to interpret it as concerning a *metaphysical* question which goes along the following line:

> Aesthetic formalism does not deal with the question of how we come to perceive second-order aesthetic qualities, given our perception of first-order aesthetic qualities. What the formalist is interested in is rather the question of how second-order qualities are "dependent on" or "emergent from" first-order aesthetic qualities in the sense that their presence results from the presence of first-order aesthetic qualities.

The idea in this interpretation is that the "occurrence" or "emergence" of the second-order aesthetic quality of an object depends on the presence of the first-order aesthetic qualities of the object, and changes in its second-order aesthetic qualities result from changes in its first-order aesthetic qualities. In a word, this interpretation takes the second version of aesthetic formalism to be a *metaphysical thesis concerning the relationship between two kinds of qualities*. And if we accept this interpretation, then the second version of aesthetic formalism does not conflict with psychological externalism, for aesthetic formalism as a metaphysical thesis has no bearing on the question of *mental content* or *perception*, which is what psychological externalism deals with. Aesthetic formalism of this kind can be seen as advancing a metaphysical thesis such that two objects with the same first-order aesthetic qualities will have the same second-order

aesthetic qualities, which is perfectly compatible with the externalist view that two particle for particle identical individuals could have different perceptions of second-order aesthetic qualities even when they have the same perceptual experiences of first-order aesthetic qualities.

The relation between second- and first-order aesthetic qualities suggested in this interpretation is analogous to that of arthritis and its constitutive physical basis. Let us recall the arthritis thought experiment by Burge. In both Earthian and Twin-Earthian cases in which they utter, "I believe that I have arthritis in my thigh", the thought experiment shows that the contents of their beliefs are different. However, the relation between the ailment itself that each calls "arthritis" and its constitutive physical basis remains constant in both cases. Notice here that this relation is metaphysical in character, distinguished from the psychological relation which concerns the mental contents of the two patients. Now some may say that the second version of aesthetic formalism also concerns the metaphysical linkage between two sorts of qualities, which is analogous to the metaphysical linkage in the arthritis example. If this were the case, we would have to accept that aesthetic formalism as a metaphysical thesis does not create any conflict with psychological externalism.

Another possible way of interpreting the assumption I find in the second version of aesthetic formalism is to regard it as concerning *a linguistic question,* which goes along the following line:

> Aesthetic formalism focuses on the question of how our *application* of second-order aesthetic terms can be *justified* or *supported* by referring to first-order aesthetic qualities.

According to this interpretation, aesthetic formalism advances a linguistic thesis concerning how our usage of second-order aesthetic terms can be justified. The idea is that *the correct application of a second-order aesthetic term can be explained by referring to a certain set of first-order aesthetic qualities;* in other words, this interpretation characterizes formalists as explaining a certain second-order aesthetic term by looking for a set of first-order aesthetic qualities such that the presence of the set is sufficient or necessary for the application of the second-order aesthetic term.

This interpretation also seems to be compatible with psychological externalism just as the metaphysical interpretation is. The assumption I find hidden in the second version of aesthetic formalism is an individualistic assumption concerning the characterization or determination of mental contents, especially perceptual contents, and as such creates tension with psychological externalism, a psychological thesis. However, aesthetic formalism interpreted as a linguistic thesis seems to be able to avoid such a tension, for it does not concern the matter of mental contents. Thus, according to this picture, when the formalist says that an object is elegant, what he means is that the term "elegance" can be correctly applied to the object, and a set of certain first-order aesthetic qualities can be picked out as the application conditions; for example, the formalist may establish that "paleness", "pastel colors", and "slenderness" are the sufficient conditions for the application of the term "elegance", but does not imply by this that your perceiving those first-order aesthetic qualities guarantees that you will perceive elegance.[75] Thus, all he attempts to show is that the application of "elegance" can be justified, and what makes his linguistic investigation "formalistic" is that whichever qualities he lists as the application conditions are all first-order aesthetic qualities. Given this, he would have no problem in accepting the externalist intuition concerning the content of a mental state that your perception of those first-order aesthetic qualities does not guarantee your perception of "elegance". Again, what the formalist of this kind is committed to is just that we can justify our application of "elegance" by citing such and such first-order aesthetic qualities, or a correct second-order aesthetic term that we should apply when the object has such and such first-order aesthetic qualities is "elegant".[76]

---

[75] Peter Kivy, an aesthetic supervenience theorist, in fact holds the view which combines the linguistic and the psychological theses. Thus, according to Kivy, a second-order aesthetic term can have a certain set of first-order aesthetic terms as its application conditions, and an individual who perceives the first-order aesthetic qualities in the set is guaranteed to perceive the relevant second-order aesthetic quality, if the individual is a rational being. It is also possible that some aesthetic formalists maintain the view combining the linguistic and the psychological theses together, and some others may support the view combining the metaphysical and the psychological theses. I believe, however, that what ties all formalist theories together is the psychological thesis, and it is the only thesis that is consistent with the overall formalist agenda or attitude. That is to say, although some formalist theories seem to include the linguistic or the metaphysical thesis *in addition to* the psychological, the latter is the primary, essential basis of all formalist theories. See the next chapter for a more detailed discussion about Kivy.

[76] This linguistic interpretation of the assumption in the second version of aesthetic formalism is in fact similar to the position held by Nelson Goodman. In chapter 2 of his famous *Languages of Art*, Goodman distinguishes *metaphorical* applications of predicates from *literal* applications. For example, we may describe a picture to be sad, but it cannot be a literal application but a metaphorical application of the term

3.8

I maintain, however, that these two interpretations, i.e., metaphysical and linguistic, are not the correct interpretations of the assumption in the second version of aesthetic formalism. Here is my reason. It is true that formalists themselves do not explicitly mention that their focus is on the question of mental or perceptual contents. Thus, it may be a bit difficult to provide textual evidence in which they clearly state that their formalism is a psychological kind, but I believe that if we keep in mind what their main goal is in advancing their theories initially, then it will become evident that they are arguing a psychological thesis.

As is shown in my discussion of advisory formalism, formalists in general begin with the observation that some of our aesthetic experiences are corrupted and not as worthy as they are supposed to be. And they consistently stress the importance of keeping our "taste", "sensitivity", "inner eyes", or "palate" as clean as possible so that they can

---

"sad", since he thinks that "only sentient beings or events can be sad"; on the other hand, our application of the term "gray" to a painting is a literal application of the term "gray". He mentions "gay", "cold", "brutal", "gentle" and so on as examples of predicates such that our applications of those predicates to a work of art are metaphorical; on the other hand, "red", "green", "gray" and so on are mentioned as predicates such that our applications of those predicates to a work of art are literal.

At first glance, it appears that his distinction of metaphorical and literal applications corresponds to the distinction of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities that I find in aesthetic formalism. However, Goodman's view is different from the formalist one in that he does not claim that applications of the former sort of predicates (e.g., "gay", "cold", "brutal", "gentle", etc.) are made possible in virtue of our having *perceptual experiences* of gayness, coldness and so on. According to him, we come to say that the painting is cold, not because of our experiencing "coldness" perceptually from the painting, but because of our understanding of how the metaphorical application of the term "cold" works as one of the modes of symbolization, which in turn requires our understanding of the family or network of terms in which the term "cold" is situated.

Thus, Goodman's position can be seen as being in line with the linguistic interpretation of the assumption in question; his investigation focuses on how metaphorical applications of predicates work. However, I am hesitant to classify him as an aesthetic formalist whose view can be captured, more or less, with my initial characterization of the formalist proposal (IC), due to the following reason. Goodman does not claim that we should avoid taking into account what the formalist considers "extraneous" factors, such as the author's intention, historical backgrounds in which the work is embedded, the representational subject matter, etc.; nor does he argue that we should focus on formal qualities only, such as colors, lines, compositions and so on. Instead, his discussion of how the metaphorical application of a certain predicate works shows us that understanding the network in which the predicate is situated along with other similar or contrasting predicates is crucial. And such an understanding seems to be impossible if we ignore the past or backgrounds of the usages of those predicates, and thus he summarizes that "a metaphor is an affair between a predicate with a past and an object that yields while protesting". In brief, his position cannot be captured by my initial characterization of the formalist proposal (IC), but is in line with the linguistic interpretation of the assumption in aesthetic formalism.

See, Goodman, N. (1968) *Languages of Art: An Approach to a Theory of Symbols*, Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, pp. 45-95.

exert their natural power in experiencing works of art. Or some sort of special way of seeing or hearing is often suggested, such as "contemplation", as a requirement of having uncorrupted, worthy aesthetic experience. The degree of length and emphasis that formalists invest in discussing these subjects only makes sense when we take them as being interested in the matter of perception, appreciation, or experience. And the same thing can be said of the aesthetic theories of modern philosophers and the theory of aesthetic supervenience in the 20th century, which will be discussed in detail in later chapters. Their lengthy discussions on "taste" as an *internal organ* in charge of aesthetic perception or on "contemplation" as a *special method of aesthetic perception* shows that their primary interest is on perceptual experiences.[77]

What I find interesting is that once again it is aesthetic supervenience theorists who clearly state from the beginning that they will not deal with purely metaphysical or linguistic questions. This will be discussed in the next chapter, but to give a rough presentation here, they make it clear, firstly, that they are not interested in *occurrence* conditions of aesthetic qualities, and secondly, that they will talk about *application* conditions of aesthetic terms but only on the condition that talking about application conditions detached from the question of perceptual experience is absurd. Eliminating occurrence conditions from their discussion means that they do not deal with metaphysical questions. However, it may still sound that they are concerned with linguistic issues, for they intend to examine application conditions of aesthetic terms. However, their emphasis on how meaningless it is to examine it without relating it to the matter of perceptual experiences shows that they are not simply advancing a pure linguistic thesis. It may not be so clear at this point, but my later examination will show that the theory of aesthetic supervenience should be understood as concerning the relation between our perceptual experiences of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities, which is also central to the second version of aesthetic formalism.

In sum, the assumption in the second version of aesthetic formalism should be understood as psychological in character, and consequently the second version of aesthetic formalism as a psychological thesis of individualism, not a metaphysical or

[77] A detailed examination including textual evidence will follow in later chapters.

linguistic thesis, and as such conflicts with psychological externalism. Some formalist theories might be seen as maintaining the abovementioned metaphysical or linguistic thesis, as a secondary thesis, *in addition to* the psychological; however, as I have argued so far in this section, what does justice to the overall formalist project and attitude is without a doubt the psychological thesis.

So far I have shown that there are two versions of aesthetic formalism depending on the justification that the formalist uses. I stated that advisory aesthetic formalism is not my interest, for I find it difficult to deny its values and insights as some guideline to help us have better aesthetic experiences, and for this reason it does not provide much to examine philosophically. Moving on to the second version, I showed that it is committed to a version of *psychological individualism* based on the following individualistic assumption: our aesthetic judgment (i.e., judgment with the relevant perception) of a work of art that it has a certain second-order aesthetic quality depends only on our perceiving the first-order aesthetic qualities of the work. In other words, it says that an individual's mental content of a second-order aesthetic judgment is entirely determined by what is internally going on within the individual (e.g., the visual images, the phenomenal or physical state, the sensory intakes of first-order aesthetic qualities, etc.) in such a way that changes in the environment that do not provide for a change in the inner state cannot bring about a change in the individual's mental content of the second-order aesthetic judgment. I also discussed that the assumption in question could be interpreted metaphysically or linguistically, but argued that the only interpretation that is consistent with the formalist project or attitude is to read the assumption as psychological in character. The individualistic assumption concerning the relation between perceptions of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities is also used in the theory of aesthetic supervenience, to which I will turn in the next chapter. After this I will show that the sort of individualism in these two theories is closely related to the sort of individualism in modern aesthetics in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Let me wrap up this chapter with by emphasizing the following point. Most formalist theories are mixtures of both first and second versions, but it is only the second version that leads to interesting philosophical investigations. It is philosophically interesting, for it creates a direct conflict with psychological externalism which is

generally accepted as the most plausible picture of the mental, owing to its doing justice to ways in which we characterize the content of a mental state. In addition to this, the fact that the individualistic assumption in the second version is also crucially employed by aesthetic supervenience theorists, even after the downfall of aesthetic formalism, makes the second version philosophically interesting. With this point in mind, let us move on to examine the theory of aesthetic supervenience.

4. The Theory of Aesthetic Supervenience as Committed to Psychological Individualism

Aesthetic supervenience[78], a topic initiated by Frank Sibley's seminal paper "Aesthetic Concepts (1959)", generated a long series of discussions which lasted over 30 years in the latter half of the 20th century, and is still defended by its adherents in derivative discussions. What I will show in this chapter is that the theory of aesthetic supervenience is based on the very individualistic assumption that I find in the second version of aesthetic formalism, and therefore can be seen as a version of psychological individualism as well.

What I want to bring our attention to before examining the theory in detail is that even though it is not intended to defend aesthetic formalism, its main investigation is from the outset focused on the *nature of relation between our perceptual experiences of second- and first-order aesthetic qualities,* which I have shown to be central to aesthetic formalism, and the sort of relation that the theory settles on is the very assumption that aesthetic formalism makes use of. This attitude contrasts clearly with that of aesthetic formalism in that it is hard to find explicit discussions about the relation in question in aesthetic formalism, even though an individualistic view about the relation is essentially operative in it. This is mainly due to the fact that aesthetic formalists are not interested in such a philosophical project, but rather in a project of art criticism, trying to encourage us to have better aesthetic experiences. In other words, it is aesthetic supervenience theorists who set out to do an in-depth examination of the relation implicitly assumed by aesthetic formalists. And the fact that the theory of aesthetic supervenience appeared almost a couple of decades after aesthetic formalism enjoyed its prime days of influence and died away suggests to me that there are some deep-seated intuitions that we seem to have

[78] The term "aesthetic supervenience" was introduced not by Sibley himself, but by authors who responded to the question that he raised initially in his "Aesthetic Concepts". His question focuses on the nature of the relation between the non-aesthetic (concepts, terms, or qualities) and the aesthetic (concepts, terms, or qualities), and those authors interested in figuring out the relation adopted the notion of supervenience, which already gained its prominence in ethics and metaphysics, in their subsequent discussions. The series of discussions after Sibley, for this reason, is generally called the theory of aesthetic supervenience, and so I will classify him as an aesthetic supervenience theorist, even though he did not use the term in presenting his position.

towards aesthetic matters, and both the theory of aesthetic supervenience and aesthetic formalism are motivated by those intuitions, which will be discussed in a later chapter.

However, I cannot simply sum up the two by saying that aesthetic supervenience theorists attempt to espouse or bring back aesthetic formalism. Some aesthetic supervenience theorists can be regarded as aesthetic formalists, while it is not clear whether all are. This may deserve a separate discussion of its own, but I will not dwell on it in this work. What I want to point out at the beginning of this chapter is simply that the individualistic relation between perceptual experiences of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities assumed in aesthetic formalism was the central issue of a serious philosophical investigation in analytic aesthetics of the latter half of the 20th century. Thus, the following discussion will show that the individualistic assumption operative in aesthetic formalism is also present in the work of major aesthetic supervenience theorists.

The original question raised by Sibley is about the nature of aesthetic judgments – to be precise, whether there are rules in applying aesthetic concepts or terms to an object, to which others have added a variety of related questions. I will come back to examine his view in detail, but to give a very brief presentation at this point, he starts by distinguishing aesthetic concepts from non-aesthetic ones in such a way that in order for us to apply the former we need to have such things as sensitivity, taste, or perceptiveness, while applying the latter only requires normal perceptual capacities such as hearing or vision. He takes “balanced”, “graceful”, “dynamic”, “garish” and so on as examples of aesthetic concepts, while “red”, “square”, “curved” and so on as examples of non-aesthetic ones.

After making this distinction, he argues that we could explain a particular application of a certain aesthetic concept by referring to the relevant non-aesthetic features, but this does not mean that those non-aesthetic features can amount to the application conditions for the aesthetic term. In order to understand this, we need to, first of all, have a look at his distinction between occurrence and application conditions, which will be presented later on, and thus I will not dwell on this at this point. (Note that what I termed “first-order aesthetic qualities” in discussing aesthetic formalism are called “non-aesthetic qualities”, and “second-order aesthetic qualities” are called “aesthetic qualities” by Sibley and other aesthetic supervenience theorists in the following sections.

Their calling first-order aesthetic qualities "non-aesthetic" does not mean that they find those qualities aesthetically irrelevant. By "non-aesthetic" they simply refer to qualities perceiving which does not require special "aesthetic sensitivity".)

The idea that aesthetic qualities have occurrence conditions is generally agreed by most philosophers interested in this subject, and thus has not been the center of the debate. For there is not much to argue against the claim that aesthetic qualities are dependent or emergent qualities in that they take place through those qualities different from themselves.[79] Instead, the focus of the debate has been on Sibley's view that aesthetic terms do not have application conditions. His exact position is that they could have negative application conditions, regarding which some (of whom Peter Kivy is the most well-known) argue that they can have positive application conditions as well. Another prominent participant is Monroe Beardsley who denies both positive and negative conditions, maintaining that no application condition is possible for an aesthetic term.

As my broad sketch of the debate shows, the main task is to examine w*hether there are application conditions which warrant our usage of a certain aesthetic term.* And what I find characteristic in the debate is that, for these philosophers, candidates for application conditions are only formal qualities (e.g., "red", "square", "curved", etc.), or in Sibley's terminology, non-aesthetic qualities.[80] In brief, they attempt to understand the nature of aesthetic judgments by figuring out whether the presence of certain non-aesthetic features can warrant the application of a certain aesthetic term. And my goal in this chapter is to show that the individualistic assumption I found in aesthetic formalism is also operative in the theory of aesthetic supervenience.

4.1

Let me begin with Frank Sibley. His "Aesthetic Concepts" is the paper in which the main question of this debate (i.e., whether the presence of certain non-aesthetic qualities can warrant our application of a certain aesthetic term) was raised initially. His intention in

[79] For example, aesthetic supervenience theorists think that the funniness of a drawn face depends on, say, the curved line of the face, not on the funniness of the line.
Beardsley, M. (1974) "The Descriptive Account of Aesthetic Attribution", *Revue International de Philosophie* 28, pp. 338-339.

[80] Some find this distinction problematic, especially the idea that "red," "square," "curved", etc. are non-aesthetic. See section 4.1.

advancing this investigation is in line with the predominant attitude in modern western aesthetics, which is to celebrate the autonomous status of aesthetics as a discipline devoted to the distinctive and unique nature of aesthetic matters. Thus, throughout the paper, he keeps insisting that our applying an aesthetic concept or term cannot be guided by any general rules or criteria; each application can only be individually assessed to be true or false by examining the particular object in question to which the term or concept is applied, and this requires taste, sensitivity, or perceptiveness, not rules.

Let us a look at his distinction between aesthetic and non-aesthetic concepts (or terms or qualities) first, which is crucial to understanding his view as well as the subsequent discussions by others. The distinction is made in terms of what is required in perceiving or applying them. According to Sibley, perceiving non-aesthetic qualities or applying non-aesthetic terms only requires normal vision or hearing. "The painting uses pale colors, predominantly blues and greens, and has kneeling figures in the foreground", "The theme in a fugue is inverted at such a point", or "There is a stretto at the close" are some of his examples in which *non-aesthetic* concepts or terms are used. On the other hand, he claims that there is another kind of remarks in which *aesthetic* concepts or terms are used[81]; for example, "The picture lacks balance, or has a certain serenity and repose, or the grouping of the figures sets up an exciting tension". "Unified", "integrated", "lifeless", "somber", "dynamic", "vivid", "delicate" are also provided as examples of aesthetic concepts, but he does not spell out exactly how we can distinguish aesthetic from non-aesthetic concepts (or terms or qualities).[82]

The only standard I can find in his distinction is that something like taste, perceptiveness, or sensitivity is required in order to perceive aesthetic qualities or apply aesthetic terms, while with respect to non-aesthetic qualities or terms, our normal capacity of vision or hearing is all that is required. In fact, he does not seem to think that he needs to defend the distinction or provide a clear-cut definition for each, for to him it is so pre-philosophical that one can easily grasp it after being acquainted with several examples.

---

[81] Sibley, F. (1959) "Aesthetic Concepts", *Philosophical Review* 68, p. 421.

[82] Sibley uses "concepts" and "terms" almost interchangeably, so my discussing one of them from now on can be taken to imply that the other is also being discussed.

> I make this broad distinction by means of examples of judgments, qualities, and expressions. There is, it seems to me, no need to defend the distinction. Once examples have been given to illustrate it, I believe almost anyone could continue to place further examples – barring of course the expected debatable, ambiguous, or borderline cases – in one category or the other… Those who in their theoretical moments deny any such distinction usually show in their practice they can make it quite adequately.[83]

Despite his confidence, the distinction has been questioned by many[84], but for now I just want to point out that philosophers interested in Sibley's original question tend to accept that we can more or less make such a distinction. For example, Kivy considers that the distinction is "intuitively obvious and clear enough to be used" as a basis for further discussions[85], and Beardsley also uses the same distinction in advancing his view. This does not mean, however, that they are blind to any problems in it. As Beardsley mentions, aesthetic supervenience theorists are well aware of the fact that "the problem of characterizing the class of aesthetic attribution generally, and of distinguishing them from non-aesthetic, has not yet been fully solved."[86] However, their position, on the whole, is that the distinction is intuitively obvious enough for us to grasp, even though no general rules or definitions are at hand. Beardsley sums up this attitude nicely in the following quote.

> It is remarkable how much disagreement there is about the distinguishing features of A-qualities[87] and how much agreement there is about particular cases. (But this sort of remarkableness is not unfamiliar to philosophers.) It seems that merely by giving a handful of examples – a method on which there has been a certain amount of reliance – one can teach a standard use of "A-qualities" and achieve a considerable degree or unanimity in the classification of other examples.[88]

---

[83] Sibley, F. (1965) "Aesthetic and Nonaesthetic", *Philosophical Review* 74, p. 135.
[84] See Eaton, M. (1994) "The Intrinsic, Non-Supervenient Nature of Aesthetic Properties", *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 52, pp. 383-397.
Cohen, T. (1973) "Aesthetic/Non-aesthetic and the Concept of Taste: A Critique of Sibley's Position", *Theoria* 39, pp. 113-152.
[85] Kivy, P. (1975) "Aesthetics and Rationality", *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 34, p. 51.
[86] Beardsley, M. (1974) "The Descriptive Account of Aesthetic Attribution", *Revue International de Philosophie* 28, p. 337.
[87] Aesthetic qualities according to his terminology.
[88] Beardsley, M. (1982) "What is an Aesthetic Quality?" *The Aesthetic Point of View*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, p. 50.

I think that their lenient attitude towards the criteria for the distinction, despite their acknowledgment of possible problems, can be explained if we keep the goal of their project in mind. Their goal can be summed up, in a nutshell, as clarification of the relation between the two kinds of concepts (or terms, or qualities), given that the distinction can be made. Thus they tend not to be too scrupulous about some problems the distinction may have, especially the possibility of establishing the criteria for the distinction itself. All they need at this point is the fact that we seem to be able to grasp intuitively what the distinction is about without relying on some clear-cut definitions or criteria. In other words, their attentions are directed towards our tendency to support one sort of statement, e.g., "This vase is delicate", with another sort of statement, e.g., "It is painted with pale colors and curved slightly." They consider that "delicate" is a kind of concept distinguishable from "pale colors" and "curved slightly" in that the latter two are mentioned as *supports* or *justifications* for the former.

Of course some authors, including Marcia Eaton, are skeptical about the distinction itself, claiming that the sort of remarks such as "How loud !", "How yellow!" can function perfectly well as an aesthetic judgment, which seems to tell against Sibley's idea that "loud", "yellow" are non-aesthetic concepts.[89] Is "loud" aesthetic or non-aesthetic, or can it be both? Does this difficulty mean that the distinction is implausible? To me the fact that "loud" can sometimes be aesthetic and other times non-aesthetic does not mean that we should completely drop the distinction.

It might be difficult to determine whether "loud", as a concept in its every use, is aesthetic or not; how could we tell that "loud" is aesthetic in all cases in which it is used? However, I believe it possible, for each particular case in which it is used, that we can tell whether it is used in an aesthetic judgment (e.g., "How refreshingly *loud*!") or as the justification of an aesthetic judgment. (e.g., "Here the music gives a sense of tension due to the contrast between *loudness* and softness.") It seems to me that his distinction can be fruitfully saved if we avoid taking Sibley's distinction simply as some sort of permanent classification of terms in their general, universal usages.

Besides, even though there are tricky cases in which a concept cannot be classified in a straightforward way, as Eaton and others point out, I find that the

[89] Eaton, M. (1994) "The Intrinsic, Non-Supervenient Nature of Aesthetic Properties", p. 390.

distinction corresponds to an important aspect of how we generally talk about aesthetic matters, that is, our tendency to refer to formal features (i.e., non-aesthetic features) in support of our aesthetic judgments. Thus, if the labeling based on "aesthetic" and "non-aesthetic" is likely to create unnecessary confusions, we can instead use "the sort of concepts in need of support / the sort of concepts supporting the former", or my terminology "second-/ first-order aesthetic concepts", taking the distinction as concerning each specific judgment.

In sum, as Schwyzer summarizes, the question is, "What is the relation between what I *initially* say and what I *go on* to say?"[90] Their common observations that we tend to refer to formal features in support of aesthetic judgments lead them to be inquisitive about the nature of the relation between the two kinds of concepts, while taking the distinction somewhat pre-philosophical. And I believe that their motivation to understand the nature of the relation not only corresponds to a chief aspect of how we talk about aesthetic matters, but indeed brings out some crucial insights that have not been noticed prior to their discussion, to which I will turn in due course.

4.2

Then what is the relation that aesthetic supervenience theorists think hold between aesthetic and non-aesthetic *terms*? At this point, I have to stress that this question should be clearly distinguished from the question about aesthetic and non-aesthetic *qualities*, which is metaphysical in character. A lot of confusions among those authors interested in this subject stem from the fact that some of the authors take the distinction to be critical and thus are scrupulous about it, while others do not. Concerning the metaphysical question about aesthetic and non-aesthetic qualities, most authors hardly hesitate to agree that *aesthetic qualities have non-aesthetic qualities as their occurrence conditions for their existences.* However, when it comes to the question of application conditions of aesthetic terms, that is, whether the presence of certain non-aesthetic qualities warrants our application of a certain aesthetic term, some authors do not seem to discuss this separated from the metaphysical question, while others do, which I observe has produced

[90] Schwyzer, H.R.G. (1963) "Sibley's 'Aesthetic Concepts'", *Philosophical Review* 72, p. 72.

a considerable amount of unnecessary misunderstanding. Thus, in my presentation of their views in the following, I will be careful about this distinction, and bring it to our attention when it is obscured in their arguments.

Let me first of all examine how aesthetic supervenience theorists view *occurrence conditions*. In "Descriptive Account of Aesthetic Attributions", Beardsley says that aesthetic qualities are "'dependent' or 'emergent' in the sense that their presence in an object results from the presence of certain other qualities in the object". And he observes that we naturally speak of this relationship in causal terms such as "due to", "because of", "responsible for", "makes" and the like. For example, when we ordinarily say that the spontaneity of the concerto is due to the articulation of phrases in the performance, the statement expresses the thesis that an aesthetic quality depends for its existence on qualities different from itself.[91] And he also says that this thesis has not been advocated seriously, nor has it been questioned, since it is empirically so obvious.

> In the process of art creation, and in the performance of performable works, we can only get an aesthetic quality through those it depends on. The waywardness of the composition cannot be corrected, nor the grace of a performance be achieved, by the simple direct process of removing a certain amount of waywardness or adding a certain amount of grace. The sculptor must alter his shapes and textures until some of the waywardness disappears; the pianist must individuate his phrases, make them more or less legato, increase or decrease dynamic contrasts, etc., until the grace appears….[92]

The idea being presented here is that the aesthetic qualities of an object depend upon the non-aesthetic qualities of the object for their existences, and changes in its aesthetic qualities result from changes in its non-aesthetic qualities; in a word, aesthetic qualities have occurrence conditions. This is what Beardsley calls the *dependency thesis of aesthetic qualities*, to which Sibley adds two more points.

First of all, Sibley points out that a particular aesthetic quality can result from the totality of the non-aesthetic qualities of the object. For instance, we sometimes notice that a small change of color in a picture is enough to remove or transform the aesthetic quality of the entire picture. And we also sometimes find it very difficult to single out which non-aesthetic qualities of an object are contributing to its aesthetic quality. In such cases

[91] Beardsley, "Descriptive Account of Aesthetic Attribution", pp. 337-338.
[92] Ibid, p. 338.

one might just say that it is because everything about the work is exactly as it is. Sibley calls this *total specific dependence.*[93] However, there are cases in which we can more or less pinpoint particular non-aesthetic qualities as responsible for a certain aesthetic quality to emerge. And critics are those who are interested in locating those peculiarly salient non-aesthetic qualities of a work of art, hoping to account for the relevant aesthetic quality, rather than being content with the sort of answer such that everything about the object is responsible. He calls this *notable specific dependence*.[94] In sum, Sibley agrees with Beardsley's view that aesthetic qualities are emergent from or dependent on perceptual qualities different from themselves, and therefore "contrast sharply with those perceptual qualities like red and green which do not depend for their character upon other perceptual qualities of things."[95]

So far, it seems that there is not much to disagree about, but the debate begins when we move on to Sibley's idea of *application conditions* for aesthetic concepts. He says:

> The relationship that I have just described holds between qualities *independently* of a person's realizing in particular cases that they do. Whether or not one *sees* that a picture lacks balance, and lacks it notably because of the placing of a certain figure, in no way bears on the fact that the placing of the figure *is* what unbalances the picture.[96] (my italics)

Here he clearly distinguishes two kinds of relationship. The metaphysical relation between aesthetic and non-aesthetic qualities that he and Beardsley sum up with the dependency thesis is distinguished from the sort of relation between our *perceptions* of aesthetic and non-aesthetic qualities. In the quote, he says that the unbalance of the picture depends on the placing of a certain figure, but such metaphysical dependency and our seeing the unbalance are two different matters; for according to Sibley, a person with sensitivity can perceive the unbalance without necessarily being aware of the dependency relationship. In the similar vein, the dependency thesis conceived by Sibley does not imply that our seeing the placing of the figure guarantees our seeing the unbalance, which

[93] Sibley, "Aesthetic and Nonaesthetic", p. 138.
[94] Ibid., p. 139.
[95] Ibid., p. 140.
[96] Ibid., p. 140.

he accounts for again by stressing that perceiving the unbalance has nothing to do with knowing the dependency relationship. Again, a person with "sensitivity" is the one who can perceive the picture as unbalanced, not the one who understands the metaphysical relation. (This will be the central debating point between Kivy and Sibley/Beardsley, since Kivy disagrees with both of them, to which I will turn later on.)

To say that the unbalance of the picture depends on the placing of the figure is to say that the aesthetic quality (unbalance) has the non-aesthetic quality (the placing of the figure) as its *occurrence condition.* Of course there can be disagreements about which non-aesthetic quality is exactly responsible for the unbalance; some might point out a different factor, say, the inverted triangular composition and the like. But this is not relevant to the point that Sibley wants to make. His point is simply that the unbalance comes from other qualities than unbalance.

Then does this dependency thesis help us in any way apply aesthetic terms correctly? Sibley's answer is negative, for he considers that it is by virtue of *taste, sensitivity, or perceptiveness*, not by knowing the dependency relation, that we come to apply aesthetic terms correctly. Recall that, according to him, one can perfectly see the unbalance without realizing where it comes from. Also, someone who has no difficulty in seeing the placing of the figure might be totally blind to its unbalance.[97] In fact, he argues that there is no rule or condition that we can refer to in applying aesthetic terms. In a word, *aesthetic terms do not have application conditions.* The following paragraph gives us a nice summary of his view.

> In short,…..aesthetic qualities ultimately depend upon the presence of features which, like curving or angular lines, color contrasts, placing of masses, or speed of movement, are visible, audible, or otherwise discernible without any exercise of taste or sensitivity. Whatever kind of dependence this is, and there are various relationships between aesthetic and non-aesthetic features, what I want to make clear in this section is that *there are no non-aesthetic features which serve as conditions for applying aesthetic terms*. Aesthetic or taste concepts are not in this respect condition-governed at all.[98] (my italics)

[97] Again, this is one of the points that Kivy disagrees with Sibley and Beardsley, to which I will turn in due course.
[98] Sibley, "Aesthetic Concepts", p. 424.

Here he says that the application condition for an aesthetic *term* is not possible, no matter what the occurrence condition for the relevant aesthetic quality looks like. In order to support this view, he examines several possible ways of condition-governing that some might propose as being operative for aesthetic terms, which he rejects one by one.
For example, one might say that aesthetic terms function in the similar way as the sort of terms like "intelligent", in that there are a number of relevant features such that a combination of those features is sufficient for the application of the term. This model seems to explain fairly well how the term "intelligent" works; for even though we might not be able to close the list of features relevant to "intelligent", a combination of some features, for instance, ability to grasp and follow various kinds of instructions, ability to master facts and marshal evidence, ability to solve mathematical or chess problem and so on is sufficient for our applying "intelligent" to those who exhibit such features. Then how about aesthetic terms? Can this model account for how aesthetic terms work as well? Sibley's answer is negative, pointing out a couple of disparities between, say, "intelligent" and "delicate".

He observes, first of all, that a person characterized by some of those relevant features of "intelligent" may not yet qualify to be called intelligent, but all that is required is to add some further number of similar relevant features so that the point is reached where we cannot but admit that the person is intelligent. Sibley thinks that this is possible, due to the fact that those relevant features "count only *towards* and not *against* intelligent."[99] But this is not the case when it comes to aesthetic terms, argues Sibley.

> We are able to say "If it is true he can do this, and that, and the other, then one just cannot deny that he is intelligent,"…..but we cannot make *any* general statement of the form "If the vase is pale pink, somewhat curving, lightly mottled, and so forth, it will be delicate, cannot but be delicate." Nor again can one say *any* such things here as "Being tall and thin is not enough *alone* to ensure that a vase is delicate, but if it is, for example, slightly curving and pale colored (and so forth) as well, it cannot be denied that it is." Things may be described to us in non-aesthetic terms as fully as we please but we are not thereby put in the position of having to admit that they are delicate or graceful or garish or exquisitely balanced.[100]

[99] Ibid., p. 425.
[100] Ibid., p. 426.

For this reason, the way "intelligent" is condition-governed cannot be used to explain how aesthetic terms work.

Another possible way for aesthetic terms to be condition-governed may be found in the following examples: we find it natural to say that someone is graceful *because* she is so light, but *in spite of* being quite angular or heavily built, and find it odd to say that something is graceful *because* it is so heavy or angular. Can we derive from these examples that some non-aesthetic features can be used as application conditions for a certain aesthetic term? Sibley's answer is again negative, claiming that even though there is a sense in which slimness, lightness, lack of intensity of color and the like count only towards, not against, "delicacy", these features are at best to count only *typically* or *characteristically* towards it.[101]

Consider those non-aesthetic features which count typically towards "delicacy" (e.g., slimness, lightness, etc). It is true that they are rarely associated with terms like "violent", "grand", or "fiery", but count *typically t*owards "delicacy". Thus it seems that we might be able to find some general rules governing those non-aesthetic features and the term "delicacy". However, Sibley points out that the very range of non-aesthetic features which count typically towards "delicacy" can also be easily associated with terms like "flaccid", "washed out", "wan", "insipid", etc. From this he concludes that an object which is described exclusively in terms of non-aesthetic features characteristic of delicacy may turn out to be not delicate at all, but insipid; such and such non-aesthetic features' counting typically towards a certain aesthetic term does not mean that the presence of the former warrants our usage of the latter.

Sibley further examines a couple of other cases which some might use to argue that aesthetic terms can have application conditions, but he rejects them all with the same line of reasoning which he employs in refuting the above cases. So instead of examining those other cases individually, let me focus on the overall logic that is consistently shown throughout his rejection of them.

[101] Ibid., p. 428.

4.3

Sibley's reasoning is clearly shown when he compares why the sort of terms that are condition-governed are so, while aesthetic terms are not, so let us go back to the case of "intelligent" and "delicate" again. The way both operate may appear similar in that we learn from and rely upon samples and precedents, rather than a set of stated conditions such as necessary and sufficient conditions. However, the reason that one of them is condition-governed while the other is not has to do with the fact that those samples and precedents of condition-governed terms "embody, and are used by us to illustrate the complex web of governing and relevant conditions", argues Sibley. In other words, we are still in the realm of general conditions and guiding principles, and we can *understand* them because of their consistent applications from case to case, even though what are provided to us are only samples and precedents.

Sibley then says that this is not possible for aesthetic terms. He insists that we cannot derive from examples of a certain aesthetic term some sort of general principles which consistently and intelligibly guide us in applying the term to new cases. This is a crucial debating point that divides philosophers, to which I will turn in due course. For example, Peter Kivy is positive about the possibility.

Then what is Sibley's reason in insisting such a discrepancy? At this point, I think it is necessary to pay attention to a critical point in his notion of aesthetic judgments. Whenever he uses expressions such as "making an aesthetic judgment" or "applying an aesthetic term", he intends them to imply that the individual necessarily has a perceptual experience of the relevant aesthetic quality in person.

> It is of importance to note, broadly speaking, aesthetics deals with a kind of *perception*. People have to see the grace or unity of a work, hear the plaintiveness or frenzy in the music..... Unless they do perceive them for themselves, aesthetic enjoyment, appreciation, and judgment are beyond them. Merely to learn from others, on good authority, that the music is serene, the play moving, or the picture unbalanced is of little aesthetic value; the crucial thing is to see, hear, or feel. To suppose indeed that one can make aesthetic judgments without *aesthetic perception*, say, by following rules of some kind, is to misunderstand aesthetic judgment. This therefore is how I shall use "aesthetic judgment" throughout.[102] (my italics)

[102] Sibley, "Aesthetic and Nonaesthetic", p. 137.

For him, saying that a person can make an aesthetic judgment, e.g., "This picture is delicate", without actually *seeing* it but somehow by learning from others of authority or careful conjecture is as odd as saying that a color-blind person can make a genuine judgment that something is green when the judgment is done by some sort of inferring, guessing and the like. For this reason, he confines his interest to only those judgments in which perceiving or experiencing the relevant aesthetic qualities takes place as well, and calls only those judgments "aesthetic". As to the sort of judgments which are not accompanied by the relevant perceptual experiences, he uses expressions like "attribution of aesthetic quality" or "aesthetic statement", and excludes them from his discussion.[103]

Then what makes us see or hear aesthetic qualities for ourselves? Sibley argues that in order for us to perceive aesthetic qualities, which is the requisite of making aesthetic judgments or applying aesthetic terms correctly, it is of no use to be provided with general rules of any kind. For rules can never make us experience aesthetic qualities for ourselves; it is only by virtue of *taste, sensitivity or perceptiveness* that we get to perceive them. As a consequence, no matter how closely we observe the way people make aesthetic judgments and come up with some general rules in such a way that the conjecture based on such rules may coincide with the genuine judgment made by someone with sensitivity, the former can never amount to an aesthetic judgment.

> If someone did merely follow a rule we should not say he was exercising taste, and we should hesitate to admit that he had any real notion of delicacy until he satisfied us that he could discern it in other instances where no rule was available.[104]

And Sibley is confident that such a person would hardly tell delicacy in other delicate objects which look different from the previous instances, even if the difference is slight.

> A man who failed to realize the nature of taste concepts, or someone who, knowing he lacked sensitivity in aesthetic matters, did not want to reveal this lack might by assiduous application and shrewd observation provide himself with some rules and generalizations; and by inductive procedures and intelligent guessing, he might frequently say the right

[103] Recall that this distinction between aesthetic judgment and attribution is also central to aesthetic formalism. See chapter 3.
[104] Sibley, "Aesthetic Concepts", p. 433.

> things. But he could have no great confidence or certainty; a slight change in an object might at easily have been wrong as right. No matter how careful he has been about working out a set of consistent principles and conditions, he is only in a position to think that the object is very possibly delicate.[105]

Another reason that Sibley uses in arguing that any general rules for aesthetic judgments are destined to fail is this: a correct aesthetic judgment can only made in virtue of perceiving *the individual and unique combination* of just those specific colors and shapes of the object. This is why we say that something is delicate not simply because it is in pale colors but because of *those* pale colors, that it is graceful not because slight curves in general make something look graceful, but because of *the* particular curves that it has.[106] No matter how precise of a rule is provided including detailed descriptions of specific colors, shades, contours and so on, it becomes of no use when it comes to helping us decide the aesthetic quality of an object at hand. What if the formal features that the rule describes are very similar to the object in question, with the exception of one feature? Can we still apply the rule to the object? Some might argue that if the rule captures every formal feature of the object (I am very skeptical about its being an interesting rule) then it may be applicable to the object; but this will surely lead to a number of tricky questions, for instance, "how can we describe *every* formal feature of an object?" In sum, Sibley's skeptical view on the possibility of finding application conditions for aesthetic terms is rooted in his belief that each object has its own unique combination of formal features, and thus any proposed application conditions generalizing the relation between formal qualities and aesthetic terms will be of no use in guiding us to apply the term correctly.

Let me sum up this section before moving on to the next. For Sibley, any rules or criteria attempting to help us in making aesthetic judgments are inevitably bound to fail. First of all, he believes that rules cannot make us *see* or *hear* them for ourselves, only taste can. It may be possible that rules make us infer or guess the aesthetic quality, but then it is not an aesthetic judgment anymore; it is an attribution of the aesthetic quality. Second, since an aesthetic judgment is a judgment made in virtue of perceiving the unique combination of formal characters of an object, which inevitably differs from one

[105] Sibley, "Aesthetic Concepts", p. 432.
[106] Sibley, "Aesthetic and Nonaesthetic", pp. 434-435.

object to another, any proposed rule that might work for one will not work for others, making the rule pointless.

4.4

Turning now to Beardsley, I find that he agrees with Sibley in major points, except that he is more thorough in denying the possibility of establishing application conditions for aesthetic terms. This tendency is clearly shown when Beardsley challenges Sibley's idea that some aesthetic terms could have *negative* application conditions. Sibley observes that "it may be impossible that a thing should be garish if all its colors are pale pastels, or flamboyant, if all its lines are straight", which seems to point out that some non-aesthetic features are incompatible with a certain aesthetic term. In other words, a description of an object in terms of such and such non-aesthetic features may make the aesthetic term *in*applicable or *in*appropriate, and this seems to suggest that some aesthetic terms may be *governed negatively* by the relevant non-aesthetic features, although aesthetic terms in general do not allow positive application conditions.[107]

It is with respect to this point that Beardsley diverges from Sibley, for he is interested in "freeing A-predicates[108] from any application conditions".[109] Beardsley takes Sibley as still admitting certain "conceptual relationships" between aesthetic and non-aesthetic terms, whereas he believes that there is none. For example, according to Beardsley, Sibley's examples in the above about "garish" and "flamboyant" can be taken to mean that, in contraposition, high saturated colors are a *necessary* application condition for "garish", and bent lines are a *necessary* application condition for "flamboyance". But Beardsley is skeptical about any such conceptual connection between aesthetic and non-aesthetic terms, claiming that "their association, however close, seems straightforwardly contingent".[110]

In order to justify his view, he takes issue with Sibley's following reasoning in conceiving the possibility of negative application conditions. Sibley says that if the relation of curving lines to gracefulness were "merely contingent, it would be

[107] Ibid., p. 427.
[108] Aesthetic terms according to Beardsley's terminology.
[109] Beardsley, "The Descriptive Account of Aesthetic Attributions", p, 343.
[110] Ibid., pp. 344-345.

conceivable that we might find occasional exceptions, a graceful straight line….”; in other words, Sibley thinks that the relation of curving lines to gracefulness is more than contingency, and thus there seems to be some conceptual connection between the two. To this Beardsley responds:

> No doubt exceptions are difficult to *imagine*, but so is a world in which fires send out waves of chilly air and there are not two, but twenty, sexes. This discovery is conceivable, if that means that it implies no contradiction – though it is enormously improbable.[111]

Beardsley considers that “graceful straight lines”, “garish pastels” and the like do not imply contradiction, although it might be empirically difficult to find those cases. For him, “it is not conceptual analysis, but *experience*, that shows us the absurdity (my italics)” when we say that a line is graceful because it is straight. He then adds that any claim to a conceptual connection must show an obvious logical inconsistency that would result from its rejection, which he believes is not likely to be the case between aesthetic and non-aesthetic terms.

He also denies any conceptual connection because of his version of the dependency thesis of aesthetic qualities, which holds that aesthetic qualities are *distinct* from non-aesthetic qualities, even though the former depends upon the latter for their existences. He believes that their being distinct means that they occupy different regions, and from this he concludes that it is “prima facie implausible to suppose a conceptual connection between two qualities that have different locations.” What he means by their occupying different locations is not clear to me, but he considers himself a Humean due to his belief that two distinct qualities, occupying different regions, are not conceptually connected. For him, “delicacy” is not entailed, included, or comprised by its relevant non-aesthetic features, but it is *causally related* to them.

Thus, Beardsley pushes further what Sibley started in that he denies any conceptual link between aesthetic and non-aesthetic terms. However, Beardsley is positive about making some sort of *empirical generalizations* about the relations of aesthetic and non-aesthetic terms. For example, he says that slow music has a “tendency”,

[111] Ibid., p. 346.

"direction", or "influence" to be described as sad in a *causal* and *contingent* way[112], towards which we have become familiarized, while Sibley questions what truth can be expressed in saying such things.[113] Jerrold Levinson terms Beardsley's position *emergentism*, which he understands as saying "garishness appears to require bright, saturated colors for its emergence, but takes this to be a fact of nature or psychology, and not a matter of the semantics of 'garish'." It is not a contradiction or conceptual impossibility for garishness to appear in the absence of bright, saturated colors, but it is just that garishness does not happen to surface without such colors.[114]

4.5

The last view I want to examine, in opposition to the aforementioned two altogether, is advanced by Peter Kivy. The core of his idea goes as follow:

> There is the kind of entailment in which some number of propositions about the "criteria" for being ϕ weakly entail, but do not inductively entail "X is ϕ"….Aesthetic terms are condition-governed in so far as conjunctions of non-aesthetic propositions do entail aesthetic propositions, where entailment is understood in the criteriological sense.[115]

He thinks that aesthetic terms are condition-governed in the sense that they are *criteriologically entailed* by non-aesthetic terms. An example he borrows from Michael Scriven would help us understand this sense of entailment: being yellow, ovoid, waxy,

---

[112] It seems to me that, with this idea of empirical generalization about the relation of aesthetic and non-aesthetic terms, Beardsley attempts to account for the fact that there seem to be some *prima facie* application conditions for aesthetic terms. It is true that he denies any conceptual link between non-aesthetic and aesthetic terms, which leads to his ultimate conclusion that no application condition is possible. However, as Beardsley points out, we seem to be able to apply certain aesthetic terms based on our past experiences which tell us that a set of such and such non-aesthetic qualities has a "tendency", "direction," or "influence" towards a certain aesthetic term. Of course, according to Beardsley, the "direction" is not of conceptual kind, and thus cannot amount to application conditions. Sibley also argues that such and such non-aesthetic features' being *typically towards* a certain aesthetic term does not mean that we can find application conditions for the aesthetic term. This shows us, for both Sibley and Beardsley, that application conditions cannot be found without there being some *conceptual* connection between non-aesthetic and aesthetic terms. Nevertheless, there arises the need for Beardsley to somehow make sense of our every day usages of aesthetic terms based on some sort of *prima facie* application conditions, which are contingent and causal in character, and his discussion of empirical generalization can be seen as a response to this issue.

[113] Ibid., p. 340.

[114] Levinson J. (1983), "Aesthetic Supervenience", *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 22, pp.93-110.

[115] Kivy, P. (1979) "Aesthetic Concepts: Some Fresh Considerations", *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 37, pp. 423-424.

and pebbly to the touch, sour to the taste, the fruit of a particular tree might be said to imply non-inductively that what is before us is a lemon, although it is not a contradiction to assert that something has all of these properties and yet is not a lemon.[116] Moving on to an example of aesthetic term, "unified", he maintains that some formal features (i.e., non-aesthetic features) are sufficient for our usage of the term, just as the combination of features such as being yellow, ovoid, waxy and so forth is for our usage of "lemon". In fact, his actual argument for *positive condition-governing* of aesthetic terms makes use of the *continuity* he finds between the aesthetic and non-aesthetic uses of the term "unified".

> ….let us contrast the criteria for ascribing unity to a symphony or a novel with the criteria relevant to its predication of a political party or a nation. A political party or nation is unified by its common goals, aspirations, values, organizational structure, shared principles, and the like. A symphony is unified in virtue of common themes, motives, rhythms, chord-progressions, key relationships, mood, tone color, and so on…….In each instance – in the political party or nation, symphony or novel – what we look for unity are the same kinds of things: common elements, recurrent patterns, shared structures: *something common.*[117]

For him, there is nothing special or mysterious about how we come to apply "unified" to a symphony, compared to how we apply it to a political party; "unity" is a "perfectly well-behaved word in English language, and it does not go berserk when we apply it to a novel rather than a nation." This continuity suggests to him that "unity" as an aesthetic term can be positively condition-governed in the same way as its non-aesthetic use is.[118]

Kivy's confidence in the possibility of application conditions stems from his different take on the distinction between occurrence and application conditions, when

---

[116] Scriven, M. (1959) "The Logic of Criteria", *Journal of Philosophy* 56, pp. 857-867.
I want to mention that there are various views about Wittgenstein's notion of "criterion" and Scriven's view is just one of them. For example, Rogers Albritton argues that the notion of criterion in Wittgenstein's the *Blue and Brown Books* is this: the criteria for so-and-so's being the case may *be* what is called "so-and-so's being the case". In other words, to be a criterion of X is just to *be* (what is called) X. However, in his *Philosophical Investigations* and the *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*, Wittgenstein seems to have a different notion of criterion, which Albritton understands as follows: a criterion for so-and-so's being the case is to be something by which one might *know* that it is the case. It is something by which one may *be justified in saying* that the thing is so, and by whose absence one may be justified in saying that the thing is not so.

See, Albritton, R. (1959) "On Wittgenstein's Use of the Term 'Criterion'", *Journal of Philosophy* 56, pp. 845-857.

[117] Kivy, "Aesthetics and Rationality", p. 56.

[118] Ibid., p. 56.

compared to the one held by both Beardsley and Sibley. Kivy is criticized by Beardsley for confounding application conditions with occurrence conditions,[119] and Kivy himself interprets Beardsley's critique as follows: according to Kivy there are some criteria whose presence allows us to apply "unified" to an object, but Beardsley claims that what Kivy takes as the criteria for the correct application are just qualities from which emerges the aesthetic quality "unity". In other words, according to Beardsley, what Kivy takes as "application conditions" for the term "unified" are in fact "occurrence conditions" for the quality "unity". Beardsley thinks that such formal features as common themes, motives, rhythms, when put together, can result in the unity of a piece of music, as the flavor of pea soup is made to occur from its various ingredients, but those features cannot be established as the application conditions in applying the term "unified".[120]

What is interesting at this point is that, instead of claiming that he does not confuse the two, Kivy seems to argue that the distinction is not so crucial as Beardsley supposes. Thus, Kivy replies to Beardsley by pointing out that his confidence in the possibility of application conditions is based on his overall view on the nature of aesthetic experiences, not on his failure to see the distinction between occurrence and application conditions. The following argument shows this.

Kivy claims that Beardsley's view on the nature of aesthetic experiences is analogous to the nature of tasting foods, which is consistent with Beardsley's idea of occurrence conditions as analogous to how the ingredients of a soup are combined to produce the resulting flavor.

> Here, the ingredients – say, celery, water, split peas, ham, seasoning – are put together, and a new flavor emerges: the flavor of pea soup. They are the occurrence conditions; and the flavor occurs in their presence, under the proper circumstances. The flavor of pea soup is not experienced as a complex flavor of all those ingredients, but as a new one which they produce, and in the producing of which they cease to be recognizable flavors themselves.[121]

And this contrasts with Kivy's view on the nature of aesthetic experiences.

---

[119] Beardsley, "The Descriptive Account of Aesthetic Attributes", p. 349.
[120] Kivy, "Aesthetic Concept: Some Fresh Considerations", pp. 426-427
[121] Ibid., p. 427.

> On my view, on the other hand, the experience of an aesthetic quality is more like the experience of the quality of "happiness" in a happy face. The face has a happy quality in virtue of the wide-open, bright eyes, the amused wrinkles around them, the broad grin, the jaunty way the head is held; but the relationship of the "happy quality" of the face to these features is not at all like the relationship of the flavor of the pea soup to its ingredients. The happy quality of the face just is – *consists in* – the wide open, bright eyes, the amused wrinkles, the broad grin, the jaunty posture of the head; pea soup *consists of* celery, split peas, ham, water, spices. But the flavor of pea soup is something beyond its ingredients, whereas the happy quality of the face just is those features in virtue of which we say that it is a happy face, and which we perceive when we perceive the happy "quality".[122]

Let me make a detailed comparison between Kivy and Beardsley, focusing on their views on the nature of aesthetic experience. For Beardsley, an aesthetic quality emerges from its basis formal features in the similar way that the flavor of a soup does from its various ingredients. Therefore, just as the flavor needs some particular ingredients for it to emerge, whether or not we can detect them in the resulting flavor, an aesthetic quality has some base non-aesthetic qualities for it to emerge, regardless of our noticing them in experiencing the resulting aesthetic quality. This is the dependency thesis of aesthetic qualities that Sibley and Beardsley hold.

Turning now to Beardsley's view on the nature of aesthetic experience, it is consistent with his idea of occurrence conditions presented in the above paragraph. According to him, having an aesthetic experience is similar to tasting food. The idea is that we do not perceive all the non-aesthetic qualities which are metaphysically responsible for the resulting aesthetic quality, just as the flavor of each ingredient ceases to be recognizable when we taste the resulting flavor. One might say, at this point, that our conscious, careful efforts may enable us to recognize the ingredients, but Beardsley can still insist that such is not how we normally taste the *resulting flavor*; to him we experience it as if it is one distinct flavor, rather than a combination of different flavors. And this is the point that Kivy seems to take as Beardsley's main argument for the impossibility of application conditions. Kivy's interpretation of Beardsley is that for him an aesthetic quality, say, "unity" is experienced as if it is one simple flavor, not as a combination of non-aesthetic qualities, making it difficult for us to notice the base non-

[122] Ibid., p. 427.

aesthetic qualities as application conditions. As I said previously, I find that Kivy's interpretation of Beardsley ignores the distinction between occurrence and application conditions that Beardsley considers critical. Instead, Kivy's reconstruction of Beardsley's argument is made in terms of Beardsley's view on the nature of aesthetic experiences. I will come back to this point later, for I think that this is a misunderstanding of Beardsley.

Turning now to Kivy's own view, my claim is that he is indeed not that careful about the distinction. Concerning occurrence conditions, Kivy seems to have the same view as Beardsley and Sibley in that he also maintains the dependency thesis of aesthetic qualities, which is supported by his example of the happy face; the happy quality of the face has wide open eyes, wrinkles around them, broad grin and so forth as its occurrence conditions. At this point, I find that, for Kivy, these occurrence conditions are also taken to be the application condition of the term "happy". This is exactly what Beardsley notices, i.e., Kivy's conflating the two different matters, but I do not think it is his mistake. We cannot say that he confuses the distinction, for occurrence and application conditions cannot but be identical seen within the context of his view on the nature of aesthetic experiences.

Kivy's view on the nature of aesthetic experiences is different from Beardsley's in that he claims that our aesthetic experiences are more like sensing a "happy" quality from the face than tasting a soup. Notice that such things as wide open eyes, wrinkles around them, broad grin and so on are still *recognizably* presented to our perception in such a way that *our perceiving "happiness" lies exactly in perceiving those formal qualities at work*. Contrary to Beardsley's view, we do not simply perceive "happiness" as if it is a simple quality like colors or flavors.[123] Kivy takes the minuet of Mozart's *String Quartet in A, K. 464,* as a good example of his idea. He says that its being tightly unified is perceived in virtue of our perceiving that it is constituted throughout by two motives, played together and manipulated in various ways, harmonically and contrapuntally, so that there is scarcely a measure in which one, or the other, or both are not to be heard. It is when we recognize these things at work that we get to perceive unity, rather than, as Beardsley claims, in our perception of unity they disappear. Thus, for Kivy, since our

[123] I am not sure whether flavor is indeed simple in the same sense that red is, but will consider it so, following Beardsley and Kivy, for long as I discuss their views.

judgment that it is unified is made in virtue of perceiving such formal features, it means that the presence of those formal features warrants our application of the term "unified" to the piece. In other words, he is positive, unlike Beardsley and Sibley, about aesthetic terms being condition-governed. And this is due to his different view on the nature of aesthetic experience, not his conflation of the distinction between occurrence and application conditions.

Beardsley's idea that non-aesthetic qualities are not recognizably presented to us in our perceptual experience of the aesthetic quality leads him to think that Kivy mistakenly "transfers" the dependency thesis of occurrence conditions to the matter of application conditions; how can we talk about rules when we are not even aware of the base non-aesthetic features from which such rules are supposed to be derived? On the other hand, according to Kivy, if the quality "happiness" has A, B, C, and D as its occurrence conditions, why not think of them as at least *prima facie* application conditions for the term "happiness", given that we do recognize A, B, C, and D in our perceptual experience of "happiness"?

As I mentioned before, it seems to me that a considerable part of the dispute between Kivy and Beardsley is due to their misunderstanding of each other. And in particular, I think that Kivy's attempt to refute Beardsley in this way fails, owing to a misunderstanding of Beardsley on his part. When Beardsley is skeptical about the possibility of application conditions, his reason is not so related to his view on the nature of aesthetic experiences as Kivy interprets. Beardsley does not mention our inability to recognize the base non-aesthetic qualities in his argument against application conditions. Recall that his argument is rather focused on the question of whether any rule with its generalized character can indeed be useful in guiding us when we encounter a new object with its unique combination of formal features. Both Beardsley and Sibley argue that making a correct aesthetic judgment depends on our perception of the individual and unique combination of just those formal features of the object; a slight deviance from any hypothetical rule is enough to confuse those who are incapable of perceiving aesthetic qualities for themselves.

Thus, even if we accept Kivy's view on the nature of aesthetic experiences, Beardsley can still question whether any generalized rules are feasible with an

appropriate power to guide us to a correct aesthetic judgment whenever we encounter a new object. In a word, Kivy's observation that we can still recognize non-aesthetic qualities in our perceptual experiences of aesthetic qualities cannot refute Beardsley's rejection of application conditions.

4.6

Let me sum up my discussion so far. The main debating point between Sibley/Beardsley and Kivy concerns the *guiding power of rules for aesthetic judgments*. The most salient reason for Sibley and Beardsley in their rejection of application conditions is that they do not have faith in the possibility of such a power. For them, a correct aesthetic judgment is made only in virtue of perceiving the individual and unique combination of the specific non-aesthetic features of the objects in question. Thus a general rule of any sort, e.g., "A pale colored, slightly curvy object tends to be delicate", is useless, since any slight change in non-aesthetic features from such hypothetical rules can result in a totally different aesthetic quality. For example, can we still say that a pale colored, slightly curvy object with a *jagged surface* delicate? The only way to make a correct aesthetic judgment is to experience the aesthetic quality for ourselves.

This leads them to emphasize the important role of taste. It is only with the help of taste that people can make correct aesthetic judgments. Recall that, for Sibley and Beardsley, making an aesthetic judgment or applying an aesthetic term correctly is not possible without its being accompanied with experiencing the relevant aesthetic quality, and for this reason they give the ultimate importance to the role of taste. Someone who understands the metaphysical dependency between aesthetic and non-aesthetic qualities is not the one who is able to make an aesthetic judgment, unless her taste enables her to have a relevant aesthetic experience as well.

Kivy has a different view about the guiding power of rules for aesthetic judgments. With the example of the term "unified" which can be used both aesthetically and non-aesthetically, he argues that the way we use aesthetic terms is not so different from the way we use non-aesthetic terms. We are provided with no stated rules (e.g., necessary and sufficient conditions) in both cases, but have no difficulty in applying them

with competence. For him, if someone applies the term "unified" to a political party in complete disregard of some general criteria, then we are justified in concluding that he does not know what "unified" means. And Kivy maintains that the same thing goes for someone who applies the term "unified" to a symphony with reference to no general criteria. Moreover, if someone has no difficulty in applying the term in its non-aesthetic contexts, using some criteria, but becomes confused in its aesthetic contexts, then we can say that the person is simply linguistically incompetent. Kivy finds it problematic to think that we are bound to be puzzled facing an object which deviates from the general criteria of a certain aesthetic term. It might confuse us in some cases in which the deviation is great, but it is absurd to think that deviations of any kind or degree will confuse us.[124]

This explains his attitude towards taste which contrasts with that of Sibley and Beardsley. For him, people who fail to apply aesthetic terms correctly should be taken as irrational, not as lacking taste or sensitivity. If someone knows that A, B, and C are the occurrence conditions from which the aesthetic quality "unity" emerges, then she will perceive "unity" and make the relevant judgment, "This is unified", given that she has already recognized A, B, and C. In a word, occurrence conditions can be used as application conditions among linguistically competent beings, and the role of taste is not required.

With these points in mind, now I will move on to advance my argument that these three views in the theory of aesthetic supervenience all share the individualistic

[124] One of the advantages in this way of looking at application conditions is that it can make sense of our applying aesthetic terms in different degrees. Since Beardsley and Sibley deny the possibility of application conditions, believing that any rules with their generalized nature cannot guide us to perceive the particular aesthetic quality of an object, their idea seems to be that either you perceive it in virtue of having taste, or you do not. That is to say, they cannot account for aesthetic judgments or perceptions that may come in degrees. The fact that we oftentimes say that this symphony sounds *more unified* than the other can be taken to mean that we refer to some sort of general criteria of "unified", and depending on how close those symphonies are to the criteria, we can say that one is more unified than the other. This sort of *comparative aesthetic judgments* is not possible if we follow the view held by Beardsley and Sibley, but Kivy has no problem with explaining them. Moreover, Kivy can also make sense of those cases in which our aesthetic judgments are not so definitive; for example, "This sounds *kind of unified*". Beardsley and Sibley consider that those who make such a statement do not really perceive the relevant aesthetic quality for themselves, and that is why they are not so certain about their judgments, which may be true in some cases. However, it is also possible that our aesthetic judgment, say, "This sounds kind of unified", is due to the fact that we simply find the formal qualities of the symphony *not that unified*. This then can be taken to mean the following: we have some sort of general rules of the term "unified", and some of the formal qualities of the symphony correspond to the criteria in an insignificant, partial, or insufficient way. In sum, unlike Beardsley and Sibley, Kivy can account for those cases in which our aesthetic judgments come in degrees.

assumption that I found in aesthetic formalism and thus they are committed to a version of psychological individualism.

4.7

First, it is easy to see that Kivy's view makes the same individualistic assumption as aesthetic formalism. He believes that in our perceptual experiences of aesthetic qualities we are aware of the base non-aesthetic qualities as being at work to produce the aesthetic quality, which leads to his positive view on the possibility of application conditions that can be characterized as follows. If a set of certain non-aesthetic qualities is the occurrent condition for a certain aesthetic quality, then your perceiving the aesthetic quality is exactly in virtue of perceiving the set. As long as you are a rational linguistic being, your perception of the set guarantees your perception of the aesthetic quality. To put it differently, the set is not only the occurrent condition for the aesthetic quality, but also the application condition for the aesthetic term. Then, Kivy's view on application conditions coincides with the individualistic assumption that I showed in the previous chapter as essential in the second version of aesthetic formalism: *our aesthetic judgment (i.e., a judgment with the relevant aesthetic experience) of a work of art that it has a certain second-order aesthetic quality depends only on our perception of the first-order aesthetic qualities of the work.*[125]

How about Sibley and Beardsley? At first glance, it seems that their views have little to do with the individualistic assumption, for they claim that perceiving a certain aesthetic quality cannot be guaranteed by perceiving the relevant non-aesthetic qualities, unless you are *a possessor of a properly working taste*. But this condition about possessing taste is an indication that their views are as individualistic as Kivy's. Both Beardsley and Sibley believe that it is ultimately the role of taste that guides us to the correct aesthetic judgment in the presence of certain non-aesthetic qualities. Unfortunately, some of us fail to keep our taste organ "natural" or "optimal", and this explains why we sometimes fail to see the correct aesthetic quality. In other words, it is because of the malfunction of taste that perceiving certain non-aesthetic qualities may not

[125] Again, terminology wise, aesthetic supervenience theorists call second-order aesthetic qualities, "aesthetic", first-order aesthetic qualities, "non-aesthetic".

lead to perceiving the relevant aesthetic quality. This, however, does not make them completely pessimistic about having agreements in aesthetic judgments, since they believe, following the main project of aesthetics by modern philosophers which is to show that the universality of aesthetic judgment can be achieved, that at least those individuals whose tastes are in the right, natural state can have the same judgment.

Now one of the consequences of such a view is that *if there are two individuals whose perceptual experiences of the non-aesthetic qualities of an object are the same in the sense that the same sensory intakes are processed by the proper, natural workings of their taste organs, then they will both judge an object to have the same aesthetic quality, which is also the correct aesthetic judgment.* Notice that this is the very individualistic assumption that the second version of aesthetic formalism makes use of. This consequence implies that the mental content of an individual's belief about aesthetic qualities is entirely determined by what is internally going on within the individual, to be precise, the physical or phenomenal state of the "taste organ" and the sensory intakes of non-aesthetic qualities processed by the organ, in such a way that changes in the environment that do not provide for a change in the inner state do not bring about a change in the individual's mental content about aesthetic qualities.

As I have mentioned previously, the *notion of taste* is crucial to understand the point being presented, i.e., that Beardsley and Sibley share the same individualistic assumption with aesthetic formalism. Since the notion has not been sufficiently examined yet, one of the topics in the next chapter will focus on how the notion has been developed in the tradition of Western aesthetics. For now, let us just keep in mind that the notion of taste held by them has little to do with the sense of "taste" in which we speak of "man of taste" as an individual who is culturally well educated or sophisticated as a result of having been exposed to privileged education which is not available to common people. In order to support this interpretation of taste, I will show that the "taste organ" has been speculated by many modern philosophers to be one of the human faculties given to everyone regardless of whether you are culturally privileged or not. This, however, does not mean that they argue that everyone's taste is equally reliable or worth considering; in other words, they admit that some people have better tastes than others. The reason for such disparity of taste conceived by modern philosophers will also be discussed in detail

in the next chapter. In brief, it is not because some of us are not culturally trained about art history and techniques and the like, but because our taste as a faculty sometimes does not work in the way it is "inherently" or "naturally" supposed to work, as a result of its being corrupted by exterior or internal interferences.

I think that this notion of taste is what Beardsley and Sibley hold, and that it consequently leads to the view that when our taste organ is in its optimal state our perception of a certain set of non-aesthetic qualities (i.e., first-order aesthetic qualities) will guarantee our perception of a certain aesthetic quality (i.e., second-order aesthetic quality). And this correspond exactly to the individualistic assumption that the second version of aesthetic formalism makes use of, i.e., *our aesthetic judgment (i.e., judgment with the relevant perceptual experience) of a work of art that it has a certain second-order aesthetic quality depends only on our perceiving the first-order aesthetic qualities of the work*.[126]

Now I will move on to the next chapter to discuss how the notion of taste has been developed by modern philosophers such as Hume and Kant. In doing so, the linkage between modern aesthetics and the two theories examined so far will also be clarified. I will also compare the philosophical motivation and tendency in the project of modern aesthetics with those of modern epistemology, hoping to obtain insights on the character of modern aesthetics.

[126] If I try to be more precise, I should have to say that the content of an individual's second-order aesthetic judgment depends on the individual's perception of the first-order aesthetic qualities of the work, which in turn is decided by such factors as the state of the internal organs, the sensory intakes of first-order aesthetic qualities, or the physical or phenomenal state of the individual and so on. That is to say, even though my characterization only picks out the individual's perceptual experiences of first-order aesthetic qualities, this does not mean that the state of the internal organs, sensory intakes and the like are excluded from my characterization. They are implied in my characterization, even though they are not the explicit elements with which I describe the assumption; in other words, I take the individual's perception of first-order aesthetic qualities as the product of those factors.

5. Modern Aesthetics as Committed to Psychological Individualism

Many authors have pointed out that individualism is one of the major characteristics of modern epistemology. Consider Cartesian epistemology for instance.[127] Descartes argues that everyone can find the secure foundation of all knowledge, if they can use their reason in a way that does not allow their previous beliefs often based on authoritative education, custom, prejudice, etc. to interfere their reason. He also argues that after finding the one secure foundation of knowledge everyone can obtain the universal truth, regardless of the particular social, historical, or educational circumstances in which they are placed, for he believes that everyone is equipped with rationality, which for him is all that is required to get to the universal truth. His idea is that all we need to do is to use our own reason properly, one of the human faculties that Descartes claims to be given to everyone, and for him this depends on how much we keep our reason as "natural" as possible so that it can perform what it is inherently supposed to do, while preventing such factors as previous education, custom, prejudice and the like from affecting the proper function of our reason. This is what many authors have pointed out as the *individualistic* character of modern epistemology, which is nicely summed up by Naomi Scheman as the following.

> The individualism of Cartesian epistemology is yoked to its universalism. Though we are each to pursue knowledge on our own, freed from the influence of any other people, what we come up with is not supposed to be our own view of the world – it is supposed to be the truth, unique and invariable….Individualism is the route not to the idiosyncrasies of individuality but to the universality of reason.[128]

This belief that each individual can have access to the universal truth without any help from other individuals or communities is what makes modern epistemology such as Cartesian epistemology individualistic. And one of the things I want to show in this chapter is that this individualistic tendency is as essential for modern aesthetics as for

[127] Descartes, R. (1985) Meditations on First Philosophy, Discourse on the Method, in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, trans. by J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff, and D. Murdoch, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[128] Scheman, N. (1993) "Though This be Method, Yet There is Madness in It: Paranoia and Liberal Epistemology", *Engenderings: Constructions of Knowledge, Authority, and Privilege*, New York: Routledge, p. 85.

modern epistemology. At this point, I want to clarify that by "modern aesthetics" I refer to the aesthetic theories of modern philosophers such as Hume, Kant, Edmund Burke, Joseph Addison, Francis Hutcheson, Moses Mendelssohn, Shaftesbury and so on.[129] Some may hold that aesthetic theories from the eighteenth century until the mid-twentieth century can all be classified as "modern aesthetics", but in my project I will confine the term to the aesthetic theories of modern philosophers.

Modern aesthetics is oftentimes characterized as an attempt to celebrate its *independence* and *autonomy* from other fields of philosophy. For example, James Shelley observes that modern aestheticians are united by their endeavors to have a better understanding of the discipline, aesthetics, itself. That is to say, they are interested in clarifying what is possible and what is not possible for aesthetics as a philosophical discipline. What sorts of things should be included as the proper subjects of the discipline and how we should proceed in examining them were the central issue. This urge to get a clear view of the nature of the discipline itself is noted by many authors as a claim for its uniqueness and independence freed from other areas of philosophy.[130] One of the main reasons that those modern aestheticians make use of in arguing for such independence is the belief that some sort of special faculty, namely, "taste", "inner eye", or "internal sense" is in charge of only aesthetic matters. This faculty is conceived to have a unique way of operation distinct from other faculties such as understanding or reason, and thus is used to support the claim that an independent philosophical discipline exclusively investigating aesthetic matters is needed.

---

[129] Addison, J. (1712) "The Pleasures of the Imagination", *The Spectator,* nos. 411-421 (21 June – 3 July).
Hutcheson, F. (1974 [1725]) *An Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design,* ed. by P. Kivy, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.
Hume D. (1985 [1757]) "Of the Standard of Taste", *Essays, Moral, Political, Literary*, ed. by E. F. Miller, Indianapolis: Liberty Classics.
Burke E. (1958 [1757, 1759]) *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*, ed. by J. T. Boulton, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
Mendelssohn, M. (1997 [1771]) "Rhapsodie or Addition to the Letters on Sentiments", *Philosophical Writings,* trans. and ed. by D. Dahlstrom, Cambridge University Press.

[130] Shelley, J. (2001) "Empiricism: Hutcheson and Hume", *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics,* eds. by B. Gaut and D. M. Lopes, New York: Routledge, pp. 37-38.
See also, Baumgarten, A. G. (1936 [1750, 1758]) *Aesthetica,* Bari: Jos, Laterza et Filios.
Ferry, L. (1993) *Homo Aestheticus*, University of Chicago Press, p.26.
Kristeller, P. O. (1951) "The Modern System of the Arts: A Study in the History of Aesthetics", *Journal of the History of Ideas* 12, pp. 496-527, and 13, pp. 17-46.

However, my view is that modern aesthetics and epistemology can be seen as coming from the same *individualistic* philosophical impulse, despite the former's attempt to claim its independence from other areas of philosophy. In order to support this view, I will examine the aesthetic theories of Hume, Mendelssohn and Kant in the following sections. This will also shed light on the origin of the individualistic tendency found in the later two aesthetic theories, aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience. It is true that the main concern of modern aestheticians was different from that of more recent theorists. The latter were more concerned with linguistic/conceptual issues – for instance, the relation between higher-order predicates, properties, etc. and more basic predicates, properties, etc. On the other hand, modern aestheticians were more interested in establishing the *rational base* for aesthetic judgments. One of their strategies to achieve this goal is to distinguish, among other things, aesthetic judgments from those subjective judgments made in virtue of purely personal preferences, prejudices, sentiments and the like, regarding which the objective agreement in judgment is not guaranteed. As opposed to this, genuinely aesthetic judgments are judgments that a fully rational mind could assent to in isolation, independent of the community at large, and as a consequence, the objective agreement in judgment can be achieved.

This shows that the sort of individualism in modern aesthetics is different from the sort of individualism in more contemporary brands; the former attempts to establish the objective, rational ground for aesthetic judgments, while the latter aims to clarify the relation between second-order aesthetic terms, properties, etc. and first-order aesthetic terms, properties, etc. However, as my discussion in the following sections will show, the objectivity of aesthetic judgment, according to modern aesthetics, is fundamentally dependent upon *what happens in the individual's mind,* independent of any reliance on community practices, opinions and the like. And, of course, a tendency to refer to the individual's mind is also predominant in the approach employed by aesthetic formalists and aesthetic supervenience theorists to deal with their issues. Thus, despite the abovementioned difference of character, the kind of individualism in modern aesthetics and that of more recent theories are essentially related; modern aesthetics provides a set of assumptions and a particular direction of solution for those more contemporary theories.

In brief, I have two goals in this chapter. Firstly, I will show that both modern epistemology and aesthetics are motivated by the same individualistic philosophical impulse, that is, finding the objective, rational base for knowledge or aesthetic judgments. Secondly, this will illuminate how modern aesthetics is related to the two recent aesthetic theories (i.e., aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience). Finally, this will shed light on how the notion of taste was initially conceived by modern philosophers, the notion which also plays a crucial role in the later two aesthetic theories.

5.1

First off, let me have a look at Hume, who was one of the first modern philosophers to focus on the issue of *state of mind* in discussing taste. In the following quote from his *Of the Standard of Taste*, Hume explains why we oftentimes fail to form a uniform aesthetic judgment about an object.

> It appears, then, that amidst all the variety and caprice of taste, there are certain general principles of approbation or blame, whose influence a careful eye may trace in all operations of the mind. Some particular forms or qualities, from the original structure of the internal fabric are calculated to please, and others to displease; and if they fail of their effect in any particular instance, it is from *some apparent defect or imperfection in the organ*. A man in a fever would not insist on his palate as able to decide concerning flavors; nor would one affected with the jaundice pretend to give a verdict with regard to colors. In each creature there is a sound and a defective state; and the former alone can be supposed to afford us a true standard of taste and sentiment. If, *in the sound state of the organ*, there be an entire or a considerable uniformity of sentiment among men, we may thence derive an idea of the perfect beauty; in like manner as the appearance of objects in daylight, to the eye of a man in health, is denominated their true and real color, even while color is allowed to be merely a phantasm of the sense.[131] (my italics)

Hume's idea being presented here is that the reason for our not being able to achieve the uniformity of aesthetic judgment is because some of us have a *defect* or *imperfection in their internal organs*. A defect in their internal organs prevents them from forming the same aesthetic judgment as those individuals whose internal organs are in the sound state. This point can be better understood, if we keep his philosophical goal in mind. His goal is

[131] Hume, D. (1985 [1757]) "Of the Standard of Taste", *Essays, Moral, Political, Literary*, ed. by E. F. Miller, Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, p. 233.

to show that from the agreement or uniformity of aesthetic judgments we could derive the standard of taste with which we can discern true aesthetic judgments. However, he observes that it is quite rare to see a case in which everyone agrees in their aesthetic judgments about a certain object, and this seems to threaten his overall project. Thus, there arises the need for him to make sense of such disagreements in aesthetic judgments in a way that he can ensure his goal of finding the standard of taste. And his explanation is that some of us have a defect or imperfection in their internal organs, and for this reason their tastes can be reasonably ignored in our attempt to establish a standard of taste. Just as a man with jaundice cannot have authority on color judgments, people with defects in their internal organs should not be trusted with respect to the matter of aesthetic judgments.

> Many and frequent are the defects in the internal organs, which prevent or weaken the influence of those general principles, on which depends our sentiment of beauty or deformity. Though some objects, by the structure of the mind, be naturally calculated to give pleasure, it is not to be expected that in every individual the pleasure will be equally felt. Particular incidents and situations occur, which either throw a false light on the objects, or hinder the true from conveying to the imagination the proper sentiment and perception.[132]

Once again in this quote Hume stresses that the defects in the internal organs are responsible for mistaken aesthetic judgments, for they prevent or weaken what the mind "naturally" would have judged. Thus, the sound state of the internal organs is necessary in our making "true" aesthetic judgments. What exactly these organs in question are is not clear to me, but throughout the essay he seems to say that they are some internal organs on which "mental taste" depends in the same way that the literal, gustatory taste depends on the tongue. In fact, he frequently compares mental taste to bodily taste in order to illustrate how the former works, and I observe that the only distinguishing feature between them is simply that the latter is located in the tongue, while the former is dependent on the internal organs; except for this there seems to be no significant difference in the way they function.

[132] Ibid., p. 234.

Hume thinks that mental taste for aesthetic judgments requires certain conditions for it to function properly which are analogous to what bodily taste requires in order to work well, such as not having tasted any strong flavor beforehand or not having a congested nose before tasting the food. Similarly, mental taste works well when it is *not interrupted* or *disturbed* by exterior factors (e.g., being prejudiced because of what you have learned about the work) or internal ones (e.g., being under stress). It is crucial to be in a condition in which mental taste can perform its inherent, natural power hindered by nothing, and this can be achieved by keeping it "intact" from factors that might affect or weaken it.

> Those finer emotions of the mind are of a very tender and delicate nature, and require the concurrence of many favorable circumstances, according to their general and established principles. The least exterior hindrance to such small springs, or the least internal disorder, disturbs their motion, and confounds the operation of the whole machine. When we would make an experiment of this nature, and would try the force of any beauty or deformity, we must choose with care a proper time and place, and bring the fancy to a suitable situation and disposition. *A perfect serenity of mind, a recollection of thought, a due attention to the objects*; if any of these circumstances be wanting, our experiment will be fallacious, and we shall be unable to judge of the *catholic and universal beauty*.[133] (my italics)

As shown in this quote, the sort of conditions such as having a peaceful mind and being able to give uninterrupted attention to the object are conducive to the proper workings of mental taste. Compare this attitude to what we sometimes associate with the notion of taste. We sometimes associate "taste" with being educated, cultured, refined and so on, and thus describing someone as "a man of taste" is generally taken to mean that he is some sort of an aristocratic art lover whose aesthetic preferences have been shaped by being exposed to a certain sort of privileged education, knowledge and experience that is not that available to common people.

However, the sense of "mental taste" in Hume's aesthetics is quite different from the above sense of "taste". For him, the mental taste is rather a human faculty closely related to the workings of the internal organs, and thus what is crucial for its operation is to keep them in a sound state rather than getting a certain kind of cultural refinement.

---

[133] Ibid., p. 232.

However, this does not mean that everyone's taste is equally reliable when it comes to making aesthetic judgments. He clearly states that some tastes are trustworthy in our search for the standard of taste, while others should be ignored. But this is not because one has been culturally trained in such a way that she knows more than others about art history, techniques and the like, but because her faculty, called "mental taste", works in the exact way it is "inherently" or "naturally" supposed to work, by virtue of its being free from exterior or internal interferences.

At this point, some might argue that Hume seems to be well aware of the importance of other factors in making "true" aesthetic judgments than keeping our internal organs as uncorrupted as possible, for he points out several times in his essay the importance of *practices* and *comparisons* with other objects in order to make a correct aesthetic judgment.[134] Thus, it may appear that his idea of taste requires more than just the proper workings of the internal organs, consequently corresponding more to the expression, "a man of taste".[135]

However, if we look closely at how practices and comparisons contribute to making "true" aesthetic judgments in Hume's theory, it becomes obvious that their job is to get rid of "particular incidents and situations, which either throw a false light on the object, or hinder the true from conveying to the imagination the proper sentiment and perception", so that the organ can finally perceive *what it is supposed to perceive in the first place.* He says that mental taste sometimes does not work properly "when objects of any kind are first presented to the eye or imagination", since "the sentiment, which

---

[134] Ibid., pp. 237-238.

[135] I think that his notion of taste eventually leads to the sense of taste used in the expression, "a man of taste". That is to say, despite his attempt to have taste dependent upon the proper and natural workings of the inner organs only, so that everyone in principle can achieve the uniformity of sentiment, such things as "comparisons", "practices", "absence of prejudices" and the like which he lists as requirements for having good taste seem to be impossible without the *right kind* of cultural training. Even though he believes that they can help us get rid of what we may have acquired from the particulars of our social, cultural environment, only the socially, culturally advantaged seem to be able to exercise them properly in the right way that he sanctions. As Richard Shusterman points out, "Hume's good critic turns out to be not one without prejudices but simply one with the right prejudices; viz. those unquestionably assumed as right (hence regarded as natural or necessary truth rather than prejudice) by his culture and its traditions of aesthetic appropriation." (Shusterman, p. 106) Thus, Hume's attempt to dissociate taste from social, cultural determinations ends up regarding the taste of those who can have access to the proper cultural trainings as the natural taste.

See Shusterman, R. (1993) "Of the Scandal of Taste: Social Privilege as Nature in the Aesthetic Theories of Hume and Kant", *Eighteenth-Century Aesthetics and the Reconstitution of Art*, ed. by P. Mattick, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 96-119.

attends them, is obscure and confused; and the mind is, in a great measure, incapable of pronouncing concerning their merits and defects". The role of practices and comparisons thus should be understood in this context in which they are mentioned; Hume's focus is on their ability to get rid of what initially clouded the eye or imagination, for instance, former prejudices, common opinions, confusions and the like. Therefore, their role has little to do with bringing in new or diverse perspectives, but more to do with removing "a flutter or hurry of thought which attends the first perusal of any piece, and which confounds the genuine sentiment of beauty".[136]

The idea that what matters in making correct aesthetic judgments is to have our internal organs in their natural or sound condition leads to Hume's conclusion that the judgment of "catholic and universal beauty" is possible. Despite his awareness that it is realistically difficult to achieve the uniformity of aesthetic judgments among everyone, he believes that it is in principle possible, provided that everyone keeps their internal organs in their sound state. When we have the sound state of the organs, our aesthetic judgments survive "all the capacity of mode and fashion, all the mistakes of ignorance and envy", and as a consequence, they will be catholic and universal in the sense that everyone in principle has access to it given that there is no defect in their mental taste.[137]

I take this requirement of keeping our internal organs or mental taste in the sound state as one of the most prominent characteristics of modern aesthetics. Hume's focus on the importance of the *special state of mind* in making aesthetic judgments contrasts with the previous attitude held by ancient and medieval philosophers that an aesthetic judgment is entirely determined by the objective property of the object.[138] Moving on to the next section, I will argue that Kant's aesthetics can be seen as a further development of this new attitude initiated by Hume.

---

[136] Ibid., p. 238.
[137] Ibid., pp. 233-237.
[138] See Tatarkiewicz, W. (1970-1974) *History of Aesthetics*, eds. and trans. by J. Harrell, C. Barrett and D. Petsch, The Hague: Mouton.
Beardsley, M. C. (1966) *Aesthetics from Classical Greece to the Present*, New York: Macmillan.

5.2

In his *Critique of the Aesthetic Power of Judgment,* Kant analyses the nature of the judgment of the beautiful (or taste) in terms of Four Moments, namely, quality, quantity, purpose and modality. In the Second Moment, *Of the Judgment of Taste, According to Quantity*, he argues that the judgment of taste is *universal* with respect to "quantity" in that everyone can make the same judgment when they face the beautiful. Thus, according to him, an expression such as "This is beautiful for me" is nonsense, for if something is beautiful it is beautiful to everyone; the correct expression should simply be "This is beautiful".[139] And in those cases in which such universality does not seem to hold, we should use the term, "agreeable" or "pleasing", instead of "beautiful". Then what makes the universality of the judgment of taste possible? He claims that the universality inevitably follows if we accept his view on the "qualitative" nature of the judgment of taste that he discusses in the First Moment.

In the First Moment, he argues that one of the qualitative characteristics of the judgment of taste is that we are *disinterested* in the existence, purpose, function, etc. of the object. And this qualitative characteristic leads to his claim in the Second Moment that the judgment of taste is universal. That is to say, the qualitative characteristic, namely, disinterestedness, is used to support the quantitative characteristic that the judgment of taste is universal. Kant argues that the judgment of taste is a kind of judgment which takes place when we have no interest in the existence of the object, but purely contemplate the mere representation of the object. When we contemplate the object in this *state of mind*, our personal need, desire, or background cannot affect our judgment, and this will ultimately result in our having the same judgment. In other words, being disinterested in the existence of the object prevents us from being affected by those factors that might produce different judgments.[140] Notice here that this idea of *disinterestedness* by Kant is in line with Hume's emphasis on removing all the exterior and internal interferences so that we can have "a perfect serenity of mind, a recollection

[139] Kant, I. (2000 [1790]) *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, ed. and trans. by P. Guyer and E. Matthews, New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 97-98.
[140] Ibid., pp. 90-94.

of thought, and a due attention to the objects" which is necessary in making "true" aesthetic judgments.

Another point he uses to argue that the judgment of taste is universal again has to do with a qualitative characteristic of the judgment, particularly concerning the state of mind in perceiving the beautiful. In the First Moment, he claims that one makes the judgment of taste by referring to one's own subjective and private feeling such as pleasure or displeasure. Then, how can everyone come to have the same judgment, when one's own private feeling is the only thing that can be referred to? It seems very unlikely that everyone will have the same feeling of pleasure or displeasure when they perceive an object, and this alone seems to undermine Kant's argument in a serious way. The following is his response to this.

> Now if the determining ground of the judgment on this universal communicability of the representation is to be conceived of merely subjectively, namely without a concept of the object, it can be nothing other than the *state of mind* that is encountered *in the relation of the powers of representation to each other* insofar as they relate a given representation to cognition in general. The powers of cognition that are set into play by this representation are hereby free play, since no determinate concept restricts them to a particular rule of cognition. Thus the state of mind in this representation must be that of a feeling of the free play of the powers of representation in a given representation for a cognition in general…..
>
> The subjective universal communicability of the kind of representation in a judgment of taste, since it is supposed to occur without presupposing a determinate concept, can be *nothing other than the state of mind in the free play of the imagination and the understanding*: for we are conscious that this subjective relation suited to cognition in general must *be valid for everyone and consequently universally communicable*, just as any determinate cognition is, which still always rests on that relation as its subjective condition.[141] (my italics)

Here he says that when we perceive the beautiful our inner faculties such as understanding and imagination are in a harmonious state with no definite concept limiting them to any rule of cognition. In other words, those faculties are in *free play* forming a harmonious relation to each other, and this is done without being guided by any rules of cognition. And the important point here is that this state of mind in which the

[141] Ibid., pp. 102-103.

free play of our inner faculties takes place can be found in everyone's mind in principle, for Kant believes that, first of all, everyone is equipped with those faculties, and secondly, the ways they work in principle are the same for everyone. Thus, the point that aesthetic judgments are made by referring to one's own state of mind in conjunction with the point that everyone can in principle have such a state of mind leads to his conclusion that the universality of aesthetic judgment is achievable.

Notice that Kant's idea of the free play of our inner faculties is in line with Hume's idea of the sound state of the internal organs. For both of them, the optimal condition of the inner state is crucial. For Hume, the standard of taste by means of which we can discern true aesthetic judgments can be derived from "an entire or a considerable uniformity of sentiment among men", and he insists that such uniformity can be achieved among those individuals whose internal organs are in the sound state. We can say that while Hume is interested in showing the possibility of deriving the standard of taste from the "uniformity of sentiment among men", Kant focuses more on the question of what makes such uniformity possible by investigating in detail what is going on in the mind, especially the way our faculties operate, in encountering the beautiful.

5.3

This brief explanation of the aesthetic theories of Hume and Kant serves to show that one of the prominent features in modern aesthetics is its emphasis on the *optimal state of mind.* In his recent paper, "Enjoying the Beautiful: From Mendelssohn's Theory of 'Mixed Sentiments' to Kant's Aesthetic Judgments of Reflection", Alexander Rueger brings to light an interesting point about modern aesthetics that is closely related to what I have discussed so far. He examines how an eighteenth century philosopher, Moses Mendelssohn, accounts for our enjoyment of the *unbeautiful, ugly, or terrifying*, and argues that the element of state of mind which I found in Hume and Kant becomes more central when Mendelssohn explains our appreciation of the ugly. In addition to this, he argues that Kant's mature view on the judgment of the beautiful can be seen as his incorporation of Mendelssohn's model in which the ugly is explained.

In his *Rhapsody or Additions to the Letters on Sentiments,* published in 1771, Mendelssohn takes up a "notorious and long-standing" problem in modern aesthetics, that is, to make sense of our enjoyment of the ugly. One of the typical ways to account for the enjoyment of the beautiful in the history of western aesthetics is to conceive the object as having some sort of *perfection* which somehow produces pleasures in us. Symmetry, proportion, harmony, clarity and the like have been suggested as the perfection of the object, having the power to give us pleasures.[142] However, this line of reasoning becomes futile when applied to explain our experiences of pleasures from unbeautiful objects. For it is odd to say that the feelings of pleasure we get from them are caused by some perfection in them; what kind of perfection can we possibly find in an ugly object?

Several modern philosophers such as Addison, Burke, Shaftsbury, Kant and Schopenhauer notice that it is quite common for us to be fascinated by certain sorts of ugly or terrifying objects, while feeling pleasurable sensations from them. However, what kind of perfection can we find, say, in a painting depicting a scene filled with entangled corpses? It seems unlikely that the perfection of the scene is its symmetry, harmony, proportion, clarity and the like, which are often suggested by many as the perfection of a beautiful object or scene. Instead, it seems that we are attracted to such a painting, even if it looks asymmetrical, irregular, grotesque, obscure and so on, which is far from being perfect. Then how about the case in which we experience pleasurable sensations in facing

---

[142] Here are some quotes from the Pythagoreans, Plato and Aristotle who are well-known for their discussions of beauty. These are just a couple of examples to get some rough idea of how the notions of symmetry, proportion, number or harmony, etc. are conceived of. A number of similar examples can be easily found throughout the history of western aesthetics.
"Order and proportion are beautiful and useful, while disorder and lack of proportion are ugly and useless." (The Pythagorean, from Tatarkiewicz, *History of Aesthetics*, Vol. I. p. 86)
"No art comes about without proportion, and proportion resides in number. All art therefore arises through number….Thanks to this proportion they achieve complete propriety. Generally speaking, every art is a system of perceptions, and system is number, one can therefore justly say 'things look beautiful by virtue of number'." (The Pythagorean, Ibid., p. 86)
"…for measure and proportion are everywhere identified with beauty and virtue…Then, if we cannot catch the good with the aid of one idea, let us run it down with three – beauty, proportion and truth" (Plato, *Philebus* 64 E, Ibid., p. 128.)
"…a painter would not let his animal have its foot of disproportionately large size, even though it was an exceptionally beautiful foot, not would a ship-builder make the stern or some other part of a ship disproportionately big, nor yet will a trainer of choruses allow a man who sings louder and more beautifully than the whole band to be a member of it." (Aristotle, *Politics* 1284b 8, Ibid., p. 158)
"The main species of beauty are order, symmetry, and definiteness, which are revealed in particular by mathematics." (Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1078a 31, Ibid., p. 164)

a vast stormy ocean, an example of the terrifying frequently discussed by modern philosophers? Again, it is not likely that our perception of the symmetry or proportion of the ocean is the cause of the pleasurable feeling, for the ocean itself is just a huge mass of water with no dividing parts in it or with a confusing welter of asymmetrical parts, making it strange to talk about symmetry or proportion, a kind of concept that presupposes a certain relationship between parts and the whole. Then what produces pleasures in us when we encounter certain ugly or terrifying objects? Modern philosophers interested in aesthetics were consistently intrigued by this question, and Mendelssohn was one of them.

What Rueger notices regarding Mendelssohn's attempt to make sense of this phenomenon is that he manages to keep the notion of "perfection" employed by other philosophers in their views of the beautiful. So the question now is how Mendelssohn incorporates the element of "perfection" in his account of our enjoyment of the ugly. The core of his argument is that in the case of the unbeautiful we perceive perfection not in the object but rather *in the experience itself.* According to Mendelssohn, the soul has its own purpose or nature that it constantly longs to satisfy, which is, in a word, to be stimulated and moved. And as long as the mind perceives a realization of its own purpose, it does not distinguish whether it is caused by the beautiful or the ugly, but simply finds it pleasant.

> The soul longs merely to be moved, even if it is to be moved by unpleasant representation. This is true in the most precise sense of the word since, in relation to the mind's projection, the movement and stirring which is produced in the soul by unpleasant representations cannot be anything but pleasant.[143]

> The soul's powers of knowing and desiring are engaged, that is to say, its reality is enhanced and this must of necessity cause pleasure and satisfaction.[144]

Given that the purpose of the soul is to be stimulated, he reasons as follows to incorporate the notion of perfection: the soul achieves its perfection when it is stimulated, for in such a state the purpose of the soul is satisfied. Notice that the notion of perfection seems to be

[143] Mendelssohn, M. (1997 [1771]) "Rhapsody or Addition to the Letters on Sentiments", *Philosophical Writings,* trans. and ed. by D. Dahlstrom, Cambridge University Press, p. 137.
[144] Ibid., p. 136.

preserved in this view, owing to its claim that it is not by perceiving the perfection of the object but by *perceiving the perfection of the soul* that we come to feel pleasure. The feeling of pleasure we get from the ugly is explained in terms of the notion of perfection just as the feeling of pleasure we get from the beautiful is, but the difference is that in the former case it is by realizing the *perfection of activities or movements of our own mind*, not that of the object.

> That we feel our mental faculties set in motion by the repulsive object, that we feel repulsed, is in itself a fact that suggests a perfection – the soul is doing what it is supposed to do, it is engaging in its natural activity, and this realization gives us pleasure, at a higher level as it were.[145]

Again, Mendelssohn's point is that our mind's reflecting on its own activities and realizing its stimulation is responsible for our feeling of pleasures from certain ugly things. And Rueger argues that this reflective element in Mendelssohn's view of the ugly is found in Kant's mature view of the judgment of the beautiful. He observes that Mendelssohn's reflective element was essentially new to his contemporaries, and thus readily noticed by one of Kant's friends, Marcus Herz, who wrote a letter to Kant, recommending Mendelssohn's view for his attention.[146] I will not present Rueger's detailed discussion as to how Kant's view changed as he had become acquainted with Mendelssohn's work, but will go directly to Rueger's discussion of Kant's mature view.

As explained in the previous section, Kant's idea of the judgment of the beautiful is that it requires the state of mind in which we have the free play of imagination and understanding. This idea as it is does not show the reflective element in Mendelssohn's theory. However, if we look at Kant's emphasis in his mature theory on *our capacity to compare the workings of our faculties* in encountering the beautiful with the workings of our faculties in cognition in general, we can clearly see that some reflective aspect is added to his theory.

In his mature theory, Kant says that the mind is fit for making a judgment of taste when it is in the free play of the imagination and the understanding, and what he stresses

---

[145] Rueger, A. (2009) "Enjoying the Unbeautiful: From Mendelssohn's Theory of 'Mixed Sentiments' to Kant's Aesthetic Judgments of Reflection", *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 67, p. 185.
[146] Rueger, p. 186.

is that this is not simply because such faculties are in a harmonious relation to each other, but also because the mind *reflectively compares* its current state with some "ideal" state which takes place in the case of cognition in general.

> …it can readily be seen that in a merely reflecting judgment imagination and understanding are considered in the relation to each other in which they must stand in the power of judgment in general, as compared with the relation in which they actually stand in the case of a given perception.[147]

That is to say, the mind compares the workings of imagination and understanding employed in judgments of taste with the workings of them when they stand in cognition in general. Through this process the mind comes to realize the similarity between the former and the latter, and since the latter is considered by the mind as "ideal", it also notices some perfection in the former, which ultimately gives rise to pleasures. Rueger summarizes this point as follows.

> The similarity of the relation (between the imagination and the understanding in judgments of taste) to that involved in cognition constitutes, in the old way of talking, a perfection, and Kant postulates that the reflection is therefore accompanied by a feeling of pleasure. In fact, it is only in this feeling that we have an indicator that the "right" relation of the faculties has been achieved, since concepts[148], by assumption, cannot be involved in a judgment of taste.[149]

---

[147] Kant, p. 23.

[148] Many key terms in Kant's aesthetics cannot be fully grasped unless we have a solid understanding of his philosophy, but since obtaining it is not my major goal in this project, I will just have a brief look at what he means by "concept". The notion of "concept" is often used by Kant when he distinguishes the judgment of the *good* from the judgment of the *beautiful*.

> "In order to find anything good, I must always know what sort of thing the object is supposed to be, i.e., I must have a concept of it. I do not need that in order to find beauty in something. Flowers, free designs, lines aimlessly intertwined in each other under the name of foliage, signify nothing, do not depend on any determinate concept, and yet please." (Kant, *Critique of the Aesthetic Power of Judgment*, pp. 93)

The idea being presented here is that we refer to the concept of an object in judging whether it is good. For example, if we are to judge a knife whether it is good or not, we need to take into account its "concept", i.e., *the sort of thing the object is supposed to be*. We may say that the concept of knife is to cut things well; then our judgment that the knife is good can be made by examining the knife with this concept in mind. Compare this to Kant's idea of how the judgment of the beautiful is made. When we make a judgment of the beautiful concerning the knife, we do not refer to its "concept", and thus do not take into account whether the knife in question cuts things well or not. The only thing we refer to is our feeling of pleasure which is produced in us on perceiving the beautiful. Thus, "concept" in this quote and also in Kant's aesthetics should be understood as "the sort of thing the object is supposed to be" (I admit that this notion

Donald Crawford makes a similar observation, saying that experiencing beauty for Kant is "a doubly reflective process."

> Experiencing beauty is thus, for Kant, a doubly reflective process. We reflect on the spatial and temporal form of the object by exercising our powers of judgment (imagination and understanding), and we acknowledge the beauty of an object when we come to be aware through the feeling of pleasure of the harmony of these faculties, which awareness comes by reflecting on our own mental states.[150]

Because of the mind's self-awareness of its own activities in the case of judgments of taste, Kant calls them *reflecting judgments*, and this is what Rueger claims as the influence of Mendelssohn on Kant. That is to say, Mendelssohn's idea that the mind realizes its own state of being stimulated in perceiving the ugly is adopted by Kant to account for the judgment of the beautiful. Kant in his mature view concludes that "when we experience beauty, the mind is occupied with *judging its own state and activity* (and only through this reflection does it judge the object)."[151]

5.4

Let me wrap up my discussion of Hume, Mendelssohn and Kant, focusing mainly on their emphasis on the optimal state of mind. Hume takes the sound state of mind in which the internal organs have no imperfection as the essential requirement for discovering the standard of taste. He believes that the uniformity of sentiment among men can be found from which we can derive the standard of taste, and that the possibility of such uniformity depends on everyone's being in the ideal state of mind. However, everyone's being in the ideal state of mind is hardly feasible, and thus Hume comes up with a group of people, called "ideal critics", who manage to keep their inner organs free from exterior or internal

---

itself is subject to various interpretations), not as the sense of "concept" that is used in these expressions, e.g., "color concepts", "the concept of three-dimensionality", etc. As I will talk more about this in a later chapter, aesthetic formalists and supervenience theorists do not exclude the latter sort of concepts, and this also seems to be the case with Kant.

[149] Rueger, p. 184.

[150] Crawford, D. (2001) "Kant", *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics,* p. 58.

[151] Ibid., p.184.

interferences. In a word, for Hume, the optimal state of mind is required as a crucial *condition* for deriving the standard of taste.

Mendelssohn and Kant develop this idea further by adding the reflective element discussed above. They both claim that our reflective awareness of the workings of the mind is crucial. Mendelssohn's theory accounts for why we get the feeling of pleasure from seeing certain sorts of ugly things, and his argument is that it is because of our perceiving the perfection of our own mind. Thus, even though the object in question may be ugly, devoid of any perfection in itself, it has the power to wake up our soul from boredom, leading it to the state of stimulation which is recognized by the mind as its perfection. In a word, he accounts for our *feeling* pleasurable sensations in encountering the ugly (not our *judging* an object as ugly) with the idea that we perceive the perfection of our own mind.

Turning to Kant, the reflective aspect in his view is his idea that we *compare* the state of mind in which we perceive the beautiful with the state of mind in which cognition in general takes place. According to him, this process enables us to realize the perfection of the state of mind in the former, by comparing it to the latter state which is already taken by us to be ideal. Thus, Kant's view is in line with Mendelssohn's in that both believe that one can be aware of the perfection of one's own mind. However, while Mendelssohn's account is merely focused on the question of why we get the *feeling* of pleasure, Kant's theory ties the matter of feeling to the matter of aesthetic *judgment* in that he argues that one's aesthetic judgment of an object that it is beautiful is made in virtue of one's own subjective, private feelings. And finally the view his mature theory settles on claims that *one's judgment of an object that it is beautiful is decided by one's reflection on the mind's being in the perfect state, which then gives rise to pleasures.*

The central element in Mendelssohn's view, i.e., the idea of perceiving the perfection of one's own mind, is incorporated into Kant's view on the judgment of the beautiful. Notice, however, that Kant does not claim that we judge an object as *ugly* by perceiving the perfection of the mind. That is to say, even though Kant adopts the idea from Mendelssohn that we perceive the perfection of our own mind, it is only used to account for our judging something as beautiful, but not extended to the claim that we also judge something as ugly in virtue of perceiving the perfection of our own mind. Kant

simply adopts the reflective element from Mendelssohn's explanation of our *enjoyment* of the ugly (not of our *judgment* of the ugly; that is to say, Mendelssohn does not claim that we *judge* something as ugly in virtue of reflecting on the perfection of the mind), but he does not tie the perfect state of one's own mind with both kinds of judgments, that is, the judgment of the beautiful and the judgment of the ugly.

In sum, for Hume, the ideal state of mind is a critical condition for finding the criteria which enable us to discern true aesthetic judgments. Mendelssohn accounts for pleasures we experience from the ugly in terms of our perception of the mind's being in the perfect state. Finally, Kant maintains that we judge something as beautiful by perceiving the perfection of our own mind.

At this point, I want to direct our attention to a consistent tendency in these aesthetic theories, to be precise, the *tendency to focus on what occurs in the perceiver's mind.* Let us observe the attempt made by Hume and Kant to secure the rational, objective ground for aesthetic judgment, since the tendency in question is clearly found in their attempt. Their main strategy in this attempt, among other things, is to distinguish genuinely aesthetic judgments from judgments made in terms of purely personal preferences, prejudices, sentiments and the like. Genuinely aesthetic judgments are characterized as judgments that a fully rational mind could assent to in isolation, independent of the nature or character of the community at large; for the rational individual's assent can come from by reflecting on what occurs in the individual's mind alone. Now their project of establishing the rational ground for the universality of aesthetic judgments can be seen as a psychological investigation in which what makes the rational mind universally assent to a genuinely aesthetic judgment is discussed in detail.

And I argue that this sort of individualism in modern aesthetics is closely related to the individualism in the more recent theories examined in the previous chapters, aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience. It is true that the main concern of modern aesthetics is different from that of the more recent theories. The latter are concerned with linguistic or conceptual issues, namely, the relation between first-order and second-order aesthetic terms, properties, concepts and so on, while the former is more interested in finding the rational base for aesthetic judgments. Despite this difference, however, I find that the individualistic character in aesthetic formalism and

the theory of aesthetic supervenience can be seen as originated from or influenced by the individualism of modern aesthetics, in that modern aesthetics provides a set of assumptions and a particular direction of solution for the more recent two theories. In a word, the tendency to examine what goes on "inside" the perceiver is chiefly employed by aesthetic formalists and supervenience theorists just as it is by modern aestheticians.

5.5

Additional support for the linkage of the abovementioned character between modern aesthetics and the more recent two theories can be found in the fact that modern aesthetics can also be seen as chiefly dealing with a *psychological* question. To be precise, it can be seen as elucidating the characteristics of our mental states in making aesthetic judgment or perception, and this is in accordance with the sort of psychological vein in aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience.

First of all, it is not hard to notice that Hume is particularly interested in a psychological question. He attempts to spell out the ideal characteristics of our mental state in aesthetic perception or in making an aesthetic judgment through his lengthy discussion about the importance of the sound state of internal organs. His consistent emphasis on keeping the internal organs free from interfering factors so as to "convey to the imagination the proper sentiment and perception"[152] tells us that he considers the right *sentiment* or *perceptual experience* crucial in making the right aesthetic judgment. In other words, making an aesthetic judgment is not a separated matter from having the right sort of experience.

In the following passage in which he talks about the similarity between making a correct aesthetic judgment with making a correct judgment in wine, we can clearly see that for him making an aesthetic judgment is not detached from experiencing the relevant aesthetic quality for ourselves.

> And now to draw our philosophy from too profound a source, we shall have recourse to a noted story in DON QUIXOTE. It is with good reason, says SANCHO to the squire with the great nose, that I pretend to have a judgment in wine: This is a quality hereditary in

[152] Hume, p. 234.

> our family. Two of my kinsmen were once called to give their opinions of a hogshead, which was supposed to be excellent, being old and of a good vintage. One of them tastes it; considers it; and after mature reflection pronounces the wine to be good, were it not for a small taste of leather, which he perceived in it. The other, after using the same precautions, gives also his verdict in favor of the wine; but with the reserve of a taste of iron, which he could easily distinguish. You cannot imagine how much they were both ridiculed for their judgments. But who laughed in the end? On emptying the hogshead, there was found at the bottom, an old key a leathern thong tied to it.[153]

This passage which is followed by Hume's emphasis on the resemblance between mental and bodily tastes illustrates his idea of aesthetic judgments clearly. Just as aesthetic formalists and supervenience theorists conceive of it, so for Hume, making an aesthetic judgment cannot be separated from having a perceptual experience of the relevant aesthetic quality for oneself. And if you yourself can perceive aesthetic qualities that people with defects in their internal organs fail to perceive, then your taste is the kind from which the standard of taste can be derived. After this example, he says that there are ways to make your taste work properly, namely, practice and comparison. As I have discussed previously, they are recommended not to get the perceiver familiarized with knowledge about art history or technique, etc., but to make his internal organs more focused and alert so that his perception of aesthetic qualities becomes exact, which is shown in the following.

> But allow him to acquire experience in those objects, his feeling becomes more exact and nice: He not only perceives the beauties and defects of each part, but marks the distinguishing species of each quality, and assigns it suitable praise and blame. A clear and distinct sentiment attends him through the whole survey of objects…[154]

To sum up, Hume's aesthetics can be seen as chiefly psychological in character in that his account of aesthetic judgment is made by way of looking at the nature of our aesthetic experiences. He discusses what sort of state of mind is ideal and how we can achieve it and the like.

Moving on to Mendelssohn, it cannot be doubted that his aesthetics is psychological in character as well. His explanation of why we feel pleasurable sensations

[153] Ibid., pp. 234-235.
[154] Ibid., p. 237.

from certain sorts of ugly objects is that the mind perceives its own activity, to be precise, the activity of being stimulated by the object, rather than the object itself. Thus his project can be seen as a psychological investigation focusing on the characteristics of the state of mind in facing the ugly, with the goal of shedding light on a puzzling side of our aesthetic experience.

Lastly, Kant's aesthetics can also be seen as primarily dealing with a psychological question, owing to his idea that the judgment of the beautiful is made in terms of one's own *subjective experience* of the mind's being in the ideal state. In the First Moment of his *Analytic of the Aesthetic Power of Judgment*, he argues that the judgment of taste is subjective in "quality" in the sense that we judge something as beautiful or ugly by referring to our own experience of pleasure or displeasure.[155] In the following quote, aesthetic judgments are clearly distinguished from cognitive judgments in that they are made solely in terms of the subject's sensations of pleasure or displeasure.

> To grasp a regular, purposive structure with one's faculty of cognition is something entirely different from being conscious of this representation with the sensation of satisfaction. Here the representation is related entirely to the subject, indeed to its feeling of life, under the name of the feeling of pleasure or displeasure, which grounds an entirely special faculty for discrimination and judging that contributes nothing to cognition but only holds the given representation in the subject up to the entire faculty of representation, of which the mind becomes conscious in the feeling of its state.[156]

To sum up, one of the distinctive characteristics of the aesthetic theories of Hume, Mendelssohn and Kant is that they are psychological in character in that they examine what occurs in the perceiver's mind in having aesthetic experiences, perceptions, or

---

[155] Compare this to Mendelssohn's view. According to him, we enjoy certain sorts of ugly objects, due to our reflection on the mind's being in the perfect state, which is caused by those objects. But this does not imply that we *judge* them as ugly by referring to our state of mind. Mendelssohn only concerns the matter of enjoyment, not the matter of judgment. Kant incorporates this reflective element, i.e., the idea of perceiving the state of one's own mind, to his account of the judgment of the beautiful. He claims that we *judge* something as beautiful in virtue of perceiving the perfect state of mind and then feeling its resulting pleasurable sensations. If the mind cannot form its perfect state when it encounters an object and consequently feels displeasures, then we judge the object as ugly. This may appear as if Kant's view conflicts with Mendelssohn's, for Mendelssohn relates the perfect state of mind to the ugly while Kant does not. Regarding this, I want to emphasize that Mendelssohn does not concern the matter of judgments, while Kant does, and therefore their views are not exactly conflicting. Moreover, instead of thinking that their views are incompatible, we can interpret that Kant adopted the reflective element from Mendelssohn to account for how we judge something as beautiful only, but not to explain how we judge something as ugly.

[156] Kant, pp. 89-90.

judgments. Their endeavors culminate in Kant's aesthetics which argues that one's judgment of something as beautiful depends on the individual's experience of the perfection of the mind which in turn produces a feeling of pleasure. Hume's contribution to this current of investigation is that he initiates the tendency of focusing on the state of mind, while Mendelssohn provides the reflective element in question.

Thus, despite the fact that the sort of individualism in modern aesthetics is different from the individualism in aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience, in that the former is concerned with establishing the rational, objective ground for aesthetic judgment, while the latter is interested in spelling out the relation between first- and second-order aesthetic terms, qualities, concepts and the like, we can say that they are significantly related. The predominant tendency in modern aesthetics to inspect what occurs inside the perceiver is also found in the later two theories as their primary approach to their aesthetic issues.

5.6

I want to wrap up this chapter by placing modern aesthetics in a larger philosophical project in the modern period. There are two opposing views concerning the nature of modern aesthetics. One of them mentioned previously as the conventional interpretation of modern aesthetics claims that modern aesthetics is an attempt to separate itself from other fields of philosophy, declaring its independence and autonomy. According to this view, "in the enjoyment of beautiful objects we experience something that cannot be captured by the discursive tools of reason", and aesthetic experience is seen as "the refuge of the irrational, the particular, the ineffable individual."[157] This interpretation sounds plausible, considering the fact that it also corresponds to the modernist attitude towards works of art. According to it, works of art are complete in themselves, transcending the need of justification of reason, morality, or utility and the like. We may easily remind ourselves of the famous artistic motto of the modern period, "Art for art's sake", as an example of this attitude.

[157] Rueger, p. 181.

However, there is another interpretation which is quite contrary to the aforementioned one. According to this view, the very attempt by some modern philosophers to establish aesthetics as an independent discipline can in fact be seen as its *integration into the domain of the rational*. For instance, Kant's treatment of aesthetic judgment as a special subject matter that deserves to be investigated separated from other subjects of philosophy may look like a declaration of autonomy of aesthetics. However, Rueger points out that it can also be seen as a "rationalist attempt to integrate the experience of beauty into a philosophical framework in which the relevant pleasure has to be accounted for as a consequence of the perception of some perfection or other."[158]

I agree with Rueger's view that the development of aesthetics as a philosophical discipline can be seen as an attempt to integrate it into the "domain of the rational" rather than the celebration of irrationality. I notice that Rueger seems to equate the domain of the rational with the attempt to explain things in terms of the notion of *perfection* which is often associated with rationality. There is, however, a more significant aspect to note than what Rueger points out in the development of aesthetics as a philosophical discipline, which is that *it is motivated by the same individualistic philosophical goal as modern epistemology is.*

As I mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, the individualistic philosophical goal in modern epistemology (Cartesianism, to be precise) is to show that each one of us can attain *universal truths* by properly exercising one's reason alone, in particular, by keeping it from being affected by external or internal interferences. In order to find the secure foundation of knowledge, it is crucial for us to doubt even those ideas and beliefs that seem to be the most basic and indisputable, such as our belief that a square has four sides or that two plus two makes four. With the hypothesis that even these beliefs could be implanted in us by a powerful evil genius, Descartes urges us to question every belief and idea, even those beliefs that appear to be plainly true, until we find the secure foundation of knowledge that can survive his hypothesis of evil genius and dream.

He stresses that his method of doubt should be applied not just to those beliefs and ideas that we come to obtain under the influence of habits, blind obedience to authorities, or prejudices and so on, but also to the sort of beliefs, e.g., that two and two

[158] Ibid., p. 181.

makes four, since the basis of the latter sort is not *yet* secure. Until Descartes finds the secure foundation of knowledge at the end of his skeptical thought experiment, the belief that two and two makes four is no different from those beliefs merely authorized by other individuals or community, even though the former sort is acknowledged to be true by all mathematicians or rational individuals, making it seem indisputable. In a word, Cartesian epistemology claims that we need to discard every belief and idea that is subject to doubt in any degree until we find the secure foundation of knowledge. And since his method of doubt based on the hypothesis of dream and evil genius enables us to question not only the sort of beliefs simply coming from the habits or prejudices of the community but also the sort of beliefs that are approved by the rational community of relevant experts (e.g., mathematicians, scientists, etc.), we can say that Cartesian epistemology is individualistic in the following sense. It excludes the role of other individuals and communities completely in finding the secure foundation of knowledge; the foundation should be discoverable by an individual going through his skeptical thought experiment in isolation.

And my discussion about modern aesthetics shows that this individualistic attitude in Cartesian epistemology is also found in modern aesthetics. Firstly, modern aesthetics is driven by the goal of showing that the *universality or objectivity of aesthetic judgments* is possible, which is exactly in line with the goal of Cartesian epistemology, i.e., finding the secure foundation of knowledge and consequently the universal truths. Secondly, the alleged method for getting to the universality of aesthetic judgment again corresponds to the method of acquiring the secure foundation of knowledge in Cartesian epistemology. Just as it is argued in Cartesian epistemology that exercising our reason properly is all that is required while the reason as a human faculty is in principle given to everyone, it is argued in modern aesthetics that an individual is already equipped with all that is required (i.e., taste) to assent to a universally true aesthetic judgment.

Of course we may be influenced by customs or prejudices prevalent in our community, or by the authority of famous art connoisseurs and so on. Nevertheless, modern aestheticians insist that the universally correct aesthetic judgment is achievable if we get rid of such factors, so that the aesthetic faculty, taste, can function in the way that it is inherently supposed to. We should not interpret this as saying that our aesthetic judgments are made completely devoid of any contacts with the outside world. In order to

make an aesthetic judgment, of course we need to encounter a certain object in the world and have a certain set of concepts such as colors, shapes, three-dimensionality, tones, harmonies and so on, which are not the products of one individual. However, what makes Kant's aesthetics individualistic in character is the assumption that one judges something as beautiful by referring to one's own ideal state of mind and its resulting private, phenomenological sensation of pleasure, from which roles of other individuals or communities are excluded.

At this point, some may find it unlikely that any role of other individuals or communities is excluded from Kant's view on the judgment of the beautiful. For this does not seem to do justice to the *relativistic* conception that we tend to have towards aesthetic judgments, which is already acknowledged by Hume and Kant in their theories, namely, the conception that the same object may be judged differently depending on the culture it is placed in. However, despite their acknowledgement of such relativistic aspect, what Hume and Kant ultimately want to argue is that if an object is truly beautiful it can be judged as beautiful by everyone, regardless of the differences among them with respect to their cultures, histories, educations, and so on; a genuinely aesthetic judgment is such that every rational mind could assent to it in isolation, independent of the influences of the community at large. We may not be able to encounter such sort of aesthetic judgments frequently, but both Hume and Kant believe that it is possible in an ideal situation in which everyone can get rid of factors that might interfere with the proper workings of their inner faculties. This line of reasoning is clearly shown in Kant's distinction between "beautiful" and "pleasing": if an object is alleged to be beautiful by a particular individual or culture only, then we should say, "It is pleasing to the individual or to the culture", rather than "It is beautiful", since Kant believes that if an object is beautiful it is beautiful to everyone. Thus, he reserves the term "beautiful" only to those cases in which the object can be judged as beautiful by every properly working mind, regardless of their differences of any kinds.

The distinction between "beautiful" and "pleasing" thus does justice to both our universalistic and relativistic conceptions of aesthetic judgments. Our relativistic conception, which Kant and Hume both acknowledge, is that the same object can be judged differently depending on the culture in which it is judged or the individual who

judges it. But notice that, for Kant, this is not true of the beautiful, but of the pleasing, and he does not treat the latter significantly in his aesthetics. This is also the case with Hume. He is well acquainted with our relativistic tendency to think that there is no point in arguing over whose judgment is better or correct. He admits that it is not uncommon to observe a case in which the same object receives different judgments depending on the culture or the era in which it is judged. He insists, however, that the universality of aesthetic judgment can be achieved in the ideal situation in which everyone can keep their internal organs in their optimal states.

To sum up, both Hume and Kant are aware of the relativistic aspect, i.e., that differences in cultures can result in different judgments of the same object, but their main focus is on showing the possibility of universal aesthetic judgments. The idea that one's aesthetic judgment is made by referring to one's own state of mind, in conjunction with the idea that everyone in principle can achieve the perfection of the mind, leads to the conclusion that the universality of aesthetic judgments is possible. And this brings out a valuable insight concerning the nature of modern aesthetics, along with Rueger's observation that modern aesthetics was motivated by a rationalist attempt to explain things in terms of perfection. That is to say, my discussion so far shows that modern aesthetics was intended to establish the rational, objective ground for aesthetic judgments. And this allows us to say that the philosophical goal in modern aesthetics is in line with that of modern epistemology, the paradigmatic area of philosophy at that time, despite the former's attempt to claim its independence from other areas of philosophy.

In this chapter, I examined the aesthetic theories of three modern philosophers, Hume, Mendelssohn and Kant, and showed, firstly, that both modern aesthetics and epistemology were motivated by the same individualistic philosophical goal, namely, finding the objective, rational base for knowledge or aesthetic judgments. Secondly, I argued that there is an essential link between modern aesthetics and the more recent two theories, i.e., aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience. Lastly, my discussion of modern aesthetics advanced by these philosophers shed light on how the notion of taste was initially constructed by them, the notion which also plays a crucial role in the later two aesthetic theories.

6. Some Objections to My Project

In the previous three chapters, I have shown, first of all, that aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience are both committed to a version of psychological individualism, and secondly, the sort of individualism in these theories is closely related to the sort of individualism in modern aesthetics in that the tendency of modern aesthetics to examine what occurs inside the perceiver is also central to those later theories in their approach to aesthetic issues.

In this chapter, I will present three objections that may arise to my project and my responses to them. The first objection that I can anticipate particularly focuses on my interest in aesthetic formalism, questioning the point of showing that the relation between perceptions of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities is individualistic in character. This objection may claim that aesthetic formalism as a theory of art criticism has been sufficiently criticized by a number of art critics and philosophers already, and thus it is rather unnecessary to relate it to the debate between individualism and externalism in the philosophy of mind in order to show how implausible aesthetic formalism is. Aesthetic formalism enjoyed a period of influence and popularity in the early to mid-twentieth century, but few people seem to be seriously committed to it these days, which is not surprising considering the fact that it has been shown to provide a very limited insight into the nature of works of art and aesthetic appreciation.

Another possible objection questions whether there is indeed any formalist theory which corresponds to the second version of aesthetic formalism, the one I argued to be the main and philosophically interesting version. In particular, objectors of this line may claim that actual formalists do not seem to have the notion of aesthetically relevant qualities in the second version of aesthetic formalism. In the previous chapter, I have characterized the formalist notion of aesthetically relevant qualities in the following fashion: an aesthetically relevant quality is such that either we can discover it simply by examining the work itself with the help of our perceptual capacities and without the help of outside resources (thus they are "in" works of art), or anyone under normal perceptual

conditions can immediately discern it simply in virtue of their normal sensory capacities and without using inferences (thus they are "directly" presented to us).

Regarding this characterization, some may question what it means to say that aesthetically relevant qualities are discoverable in virtue of our normal perceptual capacities in such an "immediate" or "direct" fashion. Does this mean that perceiving colors, shapes, lines, and so forth is perfectly possible without any previous cultural conditioning or interpretive activity, and that all that is required is simply the proper working or condition of our perceptual capacities, for example, not being color-blind or not being in a dark room and the like? Interpreted this way, the formalist notion of aesthetically relevant qualities that I characterized seems to be too naïvet a view, argues the objector, for there is no such thing as perceiving something as it is. Even our color perception of, say, red, is made possible owing to some sort of interpretive categorization or conceptualization of a certain range of hues, saturations, and brightness as red. In sum, the second possible objection claims that the version of aesthetic formalism which I argued to deserve a serious philosophical discussion is in fact not likely to be held by any actual formalists, for the notion of aesthetically relevant qualities that I find central to the version is too simple.

Lastly, some might further point out that, even if there is a formalist theory which corresponds to my interpretation, I should direct my focus to its critical problems. For instance, why not discuss how implausible is the distinction between first- and second-order aesthetic qualities employed in the version of aesthetic formalism under examination? In other words, this objection claims that showing that there is no clear way of drawing the distinction seems to be enough to expose the inadequacy of the sort of aesthetic formalism in question. This objection can in fact be applied not only to my approach to aesthetic formalism, but also to the theory of aesthetic supervenience in which the distinction in question is presumed to be pre-theoretical from the beginning. I shall respond to these possible objections one by one in the following sections.

6.1

The first objection directs our attention to the fact that aesthetic formalism has been sufficiently refuted by many philosophers and art critics already, and very few people seem to be committed to such a limited view these days.[159] In the philosophy of art or practices of art criticism, the idea that one's aesthetic judgment of an object can be affected by factors other than the individual's perception of the formal features is widely accepted these days almost to the degree of triviality. Thus, one might justifiably question the whole point of examining aesthetic formalism again, asking why I need to go through this trouble of relating it to the debate between externalism and individualism in the philosophy of mind.

In fact, a quick glance at the actual practices in the art world seems to be enough to show that its explanatory power is too limited to account for a variety of phenomena in the art world. There are so many great works of art that are not intended to exhibit pure forms but to arouse emotions, or to express ideas of various purposes (e.g., religious, political, moral, etc.), or to describe historical events as realistically as possible. According to aesthetic formalism, such objects should not be counted as works of art, and this is likely to put aesthetic formalism at odds with widely accepted or ordinary conceptions of works of art.

Not only does aesthetic formalism fail in classifying many works of art as such, its view of aesthetic appreciation is noticeably flawed. For example, most people would say that recognizing the subject matter of a religious painting enriches their appreciation of the painting, by making them notice how well the formal features of the painting are integrated with the subject matter, a religious theme, in a way that helps them experience the power of the painting better. Regarding this, formalists would say that although their experience may feel enriched or intensified in virtue of taking into account the subject matter, it is not exactly a "pure" or "desirable" aesthetic experience. When Bell explains

---

[159] Whether aesthetic formalism is completely passé deserves to be discussed as a separate topic, but I will not dwell on it in this dissertation. For example, as recently as 2002, we can still find the following aesthetic formalism in music.

> [C]lassical music is distinguished by a self-conscious attention to its own musical language. Its claim to function *as art* [sic] derives from its peculiar concern with its own materials and their formal patterning, aside from any considerations about its audience or its social use.
> (Johnson, J. (2002) *Who Needs Classical Music?*, Oxford University Press.)

why what he calls a "descriptive painting" is not a work of art, he remarks that the sort of emotion created by it is not "purely" aesthetic but forces us to feel a certain specific emotion, such as pity, admiration, etc. But how can we tell whether a certain experience is "purely" aesthetic or not? And even if we can, why should we only care to appreciate purely aesthetic experiences? This alone creates many questions that need to be answered by the formalist.

So why worry about the fortune of aesthetic formalism when it has already been reduced to implausibility as a theory of art? My response to this is simply that I am not interested in refuting aesthetic formalism as such. I agree that a number of valid critiques have been sufficiently made to show how inadequate aesthetic formalism is in its explanation of crucial aspects of works of art and our appreciation. However, the individualistic character of the relation which supposedly holds between our perceptions of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities has not been noticed by others, not just in their criticisms of aesthetic formalism but in general discussions about it. This is mainly due to the fact that psychological individualism itself was not recognized until the appearance of externalism in recent years; in other words, it is in contrast to externalism that individualism became noticeable as a particular picture of the mind. Thus, it is no wonder that the individualistic assumption concerning the relation between our perceptions of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities in aesthetic formalism has not been noticed, and one of the goals in my project is to reveal the assumption in question not just in aesthetic formalism but also in the theory of aesthetic supervenience.

Looking back at the debate between externalism and individualism in the philosophy of mind in chapters 1 and 2, individualism has been recognized as failing to do justice to ways in which we characterize the content of an individual's belief, hope, desire, etc. Given this, my discussion about the conflict between aesthetic formalism and externalism can be used to support the view that aesthetic formalism is not a convincing theory.

However, my goal is not simply to refute aesthetic formalism but to have an in-depth look at the conflict been aesthetic formalism and psychological externalism. Despite the deficiency of individualism as a picture of mental contents, it has been consistently presupposed in aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience,

without being justified or discussed in an explicit manner. This suggests to me that the individualistic assumption in these theories may be too intuitively ingrained for us to easily notice; in other words, some of our deep-seated intuitions seem to be well integrated with the individualistic assumption in these aesthetic theories. Since this will be the central topic of the final chapter, I will not dwell on it any more at this point, but stress once again that my goal is to have an in-depth look at the conflict that aesthetic formalism creates with the externalist picture of the mind.

In conclusion, my response to the first objection is simply that showing the implausibility of aesthetic formalism is not my ultimate goal.

6.2

The second objection concerns my interpretation of the formalist notion of *aesthetically relevant qualities*. I claimed that formalists construed aesthetically relevant qualities as follows. Firstly, they are as qualities "in" works of art in the sense that we can discover them simply by examining the work itself with the help of our perceptual capacities and without the help of outside researches; and secondly, they are qualities "directly" presented to our perception in the sense that anyone with normal perceptual capacities can be aware of them without using inferences or conjectures. Now some may find it unlikely that there is indeed a formalist theory based on this notion of aesthetically relevant qualities, while pointing out that the notion is simply too naïve. For a starter, what does it mean that aesthetically relevant qualities can be perceived by anyone with normal perceptual capacities in an "immediate" or "direct" fashion?

With respect to this challenge, I will show, by way of discussing Eduard Hanslick's musical formalism, firstly that a formalist theory as archetypal and influential as his is indeed based on the above notion of aesthetically relevant qualities, and secondly that the formalist idea of "direct" or "immediate" awareness is not as naïve as it might look at first glance.

6.2.1

Hanslick was one of those who initiated the movement of aesthetic formalism in music. He opens the first chapter of his famous *On the Musically Beautiful* by saying that the proper subject of musical aesthetics is *what is beautiful* in music, not the *feelings* we get from hearing it. He criticizes the old way of musical aesthetics, pointing out that it considers the beautiful only with regard to the sensation evoked in us by hearing music. To him, this tendency, along with the fact that music is "the most ethereal of the arts", explains why a serious, objective musical aesthetics is hard to find. He insists that musical aesthetics should strive to be as objective as natural science, and thus it should "break away from a method which takes subjective feeling as its starting point"; musical aesthetics should focus on "the thing itself", and seek what is objective and enduring beneath our flickering impressions and feelings.[160]

The first two chapters of *On the Musically Beautiful* are thus dedicated to refuting two lines of arguments alleging a close relationship between music and feeling, which he considers the main reason for the failure of having "objective" musical aesthetics. The first argument claims that arousing feeling is the *purpose* of music, and the second claims that feelings are the *contents* of music. I believe that examining how he refutes these two arguments will enable us to see that the notion of aesthetically relevant qualities that I take to be central to the philosophically interesting kind of aesthetic formalism is indeed employed in a standard formalist theory such as Hanslick's, and consequently that his theory can be seen as an example of the kind of formalism that I focus on in this work.

6.2.2

The first argument intending to show the close relationship between music and feeling holds that arousing feeling is the *purpose* of music, regarding which Hanslick says:

> …beauty has no purpose at all, for it is mere form…Beauty is and remains beauty even if no feelings are aroused and even if it be neither perceived nor thought.[161]

[160] Hanslick, E. (1986 [1891]) *On the Musically Beautiful*, trans. and ed. by G. Payzant, Hackett Publishing Company, p. 1.
[161] Ibid., p. 3.

Here Hanslick's idea of beauty is that it emerges from or consists in mere form and has nothing to do with feelings. He also believes that beauty is a kind of quality that exists regardless of its being perceived or conceived. Then what makes us aware of beauty, if it is not through feeling?

> It is not by means of feeling that we become aware of beauty, but by means of the *imagination* as the activity of *pure contemplation*.[162] (my italics)

My reconstruction of his argument in these passages is this: since beauty is what we look for in listening to music and feeling is not contributive to achieving such a goal, arousing feeling cannot be the purpose of music. What I want to focus on in particular at this point is his discussion of *pure contemplation* in which my interpretation of the formalist notion of aesthetically relevant qualities can be found. This examination will also show that my interpretation of the formalist notion is not as naïve as some objectors to my project might think. The following is his introductory discussion of pure contemplation.

> It is remarkable how musicians and the older aestheticians concern themselves only with the contrast between feeling and understanding, as if the main thing did not lie directly between the two. Out of the imagination of the composer, the piece of music arises for the imagination of the listener. Certainly with regard to beauty, imagining is not mere contemplating, but *contemplating with active understanding*, i.e., conceiving and judging. Of course these processes occur so swiftly that we are unaware of them and are deceived into thinking that what, in truth, depends on *several intermediate processes occurs immediately*. The word contemplation has long since been extended to include all sense appearance and not merely the visual. And it serves very well for what we do when we listen attentively to the sequence of tonal forms that is music…….In pure contemplation the hearer takes in nothing but the piece of music being played. (my italics)[163]

Here he explains that the imagination, which is between feeling and understanding, is the main faculty that gets used when we listen to music, and the sort of thing that the imagination does is characterized by him as pure contemplation. According to him, pure contemplation which takes place in listening to music is not just "mere contemplating but

[162] Ibid., p. 3.
[163] Ibid., p. 4.

contemplating with active understanding" in that the listener makes use of the understanding actively, contrary to the competing view that only the feeling gets involved in listening to music. And what is interesting about his notion of imagination is that it "deceives" us into thinking that such contemplation occurs "immediately", even though it depends on "several intermediate processes", in a way that makes the hearer think that *he takes in nothing but what is being presented to him at the moment.*

Therefore, according to Hanslick, when we listen to a piece of music, being aware of its formal qualities such as its tones, melodies, harmonies, motif developments and so on, the experiential characteristic of it is not likely to make us aware that we are in fact involved in several intermediate processes with the active, conscious involvement of understanding; instead the experiential characteristic is such that those formal qualities feel as if they were presented to our perception at the moment of encountering them without our having to use other capacities than our normal perceptual capacities. Notice here that this is in line with my interpretation of the formalist notion of aesthetically relevant qualities in which "direct" or "immediate" awareness plays a crucial role.

However, even if we grant this side of experiential or phenomenological characteristic of perceiving formal qualities, it seems very likely that we can notice the intermediate processes and also the active involvement of cognitive capacities in cases in which we have to apply a relatively more advanced or professional technique of musical analysis in order to grasp a certain aesthetic quality. This, however, is not what Hanslick has in mind as the way the imagination operates. For him the imagination does not require some sort of special skills that only professionally trained listeners can make use of. It rather corresponds to the idea of "taste" that Hume and Kant had in mind, i.e., taste as "inner eye" or "internal sense" whose sound state is crucial in perceiving aesthetically relevant qualities or beauty. What Hanslick says in the following provides more evidence in favor of this interpretation.

> All musical elements have mysterious bonds and affinities among themselves, determined by natural laws. These, imperceptibly regulating rhythm, melody, and harmony, require obedience from human music, and they stamp as caprice and ugliness every noncompliant relationship. They reside, though not in a manner open to scientific investigation, instinctively in every *cultivated ear*, which accordingly perceives the organic, rational coherence of a group of tones, or its absurdity and unnaturalness, *by*

> *mere contemplation with no concept as its criterion* or tertium comparaionis.[164] (my italics)

His idea in this quote is that even though the law or principle regulating musical elements such as rhythm, melody, harmony and so forth is not open to scientific investigation, cultivated ears will grasp the rightness or unnaturalness of music, not by referring to some concepts or criterion but by mere contemplation, which reminds us of Kant's argument that no concept limits the workings of our faculties in grasping beauty.[165] Notice again that this is in line with the notion of aesthetically relevant qualities which I have shown to be central to the philosophically interesting kind of aesthetic formalism.

Another point I want to bring to attention is his mentioning of "cultivated ears" along with "mere contemplation", which shows that his idea of aesthetically relevant qualities is not as naïve as it might appear at first glance. "Cultivated ears" in the above quote can be taken as his acceptance of some range of previous cultural trainings in perceiving aesthetically relevant qualities, while "mere contemplation" captures the phenomenological aspect of our aesthetic experiences, i.e., grasping aesthetically relevant qualities feels as if it is done in the "immediate" or "direct" fashion. This shows that his view on the way aesthetically relevant qualities are perceived is not simple, even though he talks about "mere" contemplation which occurs "immediately".

Some may find that this complexity lead to self-contradiction, due to his acceptance of some prior cultural conditionings, while claiming that the proper working of our perceptual capacities is sufficient for perceiving aesthetically relevant qualities. This seeming contradiction, however, disappears, if we keep in mind how the imagination works as the faculty responsible for grasping aesthetically relevant qualities. The imagination is assumed by Hanslick to lie *between* understanding and feeling, and this accounts for the experiential characteristic of our aesthetic perception such that we are "deceived" into thinking that understanding is not actively in use. In other words, our perceptual experience of aesthetically relevant qualities has the phenomenological characteristic (i.e., how it "feels") that it feels as if those qualities are immediately present in our experience in the sense that all that is required is our careful attention of

---

[164] Ibid., p. 31.
[165] See chapter 5.

what is given to our ear at the moment. In sum, *the imagination's taking part in both feeling and understanding* constitutes this complex manner in which we experience aesthetically relevant qualities, despite its appearing to be too naïve at first glance. The sensational and the cognitive sides of the imagination are maintained by Hanslick to be balanced in a way rather than conflicting, which reminds us of Kant's view on the harmonious state of the faculties.

So far my discussion of the "immediate" or "direct" awareness, assumed in the second version of aesthetic formalism, shows that it bears on the question, "What is required to perceive aesthetically relevant qualities?", rather than "Does it take an instance or longer than that?" It is my understanding that formalists including Hanslick have no difficulty in accepting that we sometimes have to listen to the music more than once. In fact, they sometimes encourage us to do *further probing* such as hearing multiple times to notice the structure or grammar that may escape us at the first hearing; they believe that listening multiple times would help us sense what we missed in the first place or make what was confusing to us articulate and coherent, with which I agree completely.

Then does this tell against their idea of "immediate" fashion in which aesthetically relevant qualities are perceived, for it is "further" than "immediate"? I do not think so. The formalist idea of "immediate" fashion is compatible with "further probing". What the formalist encourages us to do in listening multiples times is not to apply some professional techniques of analyzing music but to keep listening while having our ears as attentive as possible. (This certainly reminds us of what modern philosophers in chapter 5 stress consistently, that is, the importance of having our inner organs at its natural, uninterrupted state.) What we need to discover is the sort of formal features such as the main melody's ascending here and descending there, etc., not the main melody's being developed in a specific manner of contra-position. Thus, formalists can say that we get to finally perceive, with the help of "further probing", what we have missed or what we were supposed to hear initially, which would have been possible if we had paid uninterrupted, untainted attention to it in the first place. And this is consistent with their notion of "immediate" fashion in which aesthetically relevant qualities are perceived.

In sum, some aesthetically relevant qualities require "further probing" to be perceived, but what is required, according to the formalist picture, is still nothing more

than listening to the music as closely and carefully as possible, making "further probing" compatible with the formalist idea of immediate or direct awareness of aesthetically relevant qualities; the sense of immediacy or directness in question has little to do with the matter of time required. Another quote from Hanslick gives support to this interpretation of the formalist notion of aesthetically relevant qualities:

> The beauty of a self-subsistent, simple theme makes itself known in aesthetical awareness with an *immediacy* which permits no other explanation than the inner appropriateness of the phenomenon, the harmony of its parts, without reference to any external third factor.[166] (my italics)

Again, the notion of immediacy he has in mind is not related to how *instantly* we come to be aware of the beauty of music, but to the idea that we can discover it simply by examining the work itself without the help of outside researches (the first way of conceiving aesthetically relevant qualities) or inferences (the second way).

To sum up, according to Hanslick, perceiving aesthetically relevant qualities is governed by the *imagination* or *pure contemplation,* a unique faculty distinguished from feeling and understanding due to its distinctive phenomenological character. The imagination in his theory is alleged to deceive us into thinking that we are aware of aesthetically relevant qualities in the "direct" and "immediate" fashion discussed above, and this gives support to my characterization of the formalist notion of aesthetically relevant qualities in which direct or immediate awareness plays an essential role. Moreover, that the imagination is in the middle ground between feeling and understanding explains why the formalist picture is not as naïve as it initially appears and how it can hold the seeming contradictory views together.

6.2.3

So far I have examined the first line of argument commonly advanced in support of the close relation between music and feeling (i.e., that arousing feeling is the purpose of music) and how Hanslick challenges it. In order to strengthen his counterargument, he further points out that arousing feelings is no more the specific essence of music than it is

[166] Ibid., p. 32.

the purpose of the arts as a whole, and I want to focus on this point in this section to show once again that his formalism can be seen as incorporating the notion of aesthetically relevant qualities that I have argued to be conceived by formalists. Let me begin with the following quotes in which he seems to claim that music can inspire, give rise to, or cause such feelings as devotion, wanderlust, etc., and thus has a close tie to the "force of real life".

> Once we grasp that the active imagination is the real organ of the beautiful, feeling will be admitted to be a secondary effect in each of the arts. Does a great historical painting not move us with the force of real life? Do Raphael's Madonnas not dispose us to devotion, Poussin's landscapes to wanderlust? Could we view Strasbourg Cathedral with no effects upon our feeling? The answer is not in doubt. And it applies also to poetry and indeed to many nonaesthetical preoccupations, such as religious fervor, rhetoric, etc. Thus we see that *all the other arts likewise have strong effects upon feeling*.[167] (my italics)

> *Every genuine artwork stands in some kind of relation to our feeling*, but none in an exclusive relation….Thus, instead of clinging to secondary and vague feeling-effects of musical phenomena, we would do better to penetrate to the inner nature of the works and try, from the principles of their own structure, to account for the unique efficacy of the impressions we receive from them.[168] (my italics)

Do these quotes tell us that Hanslick's formalism is different from the kind of formalism of my interest, due to his granting that one of music's powers lies in its being related to the "force of real life", while the kind of formalism discussed in the previous chapters holds that anything that suggests a connection to real life is aesthetically irrelevant? With this point, some may argue that the kind of formalism of my focus with such a limited scope can hardly be held by actual formalists; and thus, why bother to discuss such a limited, implausible theory? A formalist theory such as Hanslick's seems to provide a richer perspective on aesthetically relevant qualities, owing to its acknowledging the close relation between music and "real life" while still stressing the importance of pure forms of music.

This interpretation of Hanslick's view, however, is mistaken. His main point in the above quotes is, first of all, that the power of arousing feelings is not exclusive to

[167] Ibid., p. 5.
[168] Ibid., p. 6.

music but can be found in all kinds of art, and secondly, that arousing real life feelings is a *secondary,* even *insignificant* effect of the arts. Here is another passage in which he seems to accept the close connection between music and real life feelings.

> Nowadays we can scarcely understand how our grandparents could regard some particular musical sequence as a precisely corresponding impression of a particular state of feeling. Evidence for this is the extraordinary difference between the reactions of Mozart's, Beethoven's, and Weber's contemporaries to their compositions and our own reaction today. How many works by Mozart were declared in his time to be the most passionate, ardent, and audacious within the reach of musical mood-painting. At that time, people contrasted the tranquility and wholesomeness of Haydn's symphonies with the outbursts of vehement passion, bitter struggle, and piercing agony of Mozart's. Twenty or thirty years later, they made exactly the same comparison between Mozart and Beethoven. Mozart's position as representative of violent, inspired passion was taken over by Beethoven, and Mozart was promoted to Haydn's Olympian classicism. Any attentive musician who lives long enough will encounter similar metamorphoses.

He may appear to argue that the same musical piece can give rise to different feelings or qualities as it goes through different cultural atmospheres in which it is appreciated. Thus, one may interpret this as showing that his formalism is different from the kind of formalism of my interest, due to his seeming acceptance that our perception of aesthetic qualities can be partially determined by something other than our perception of formal qualities. However, what follows the above quote tells a different story.

> Nevertheless, throughout this variation in the impression of feeling, the musical value of many works remains in itself for us unaltered, their originality and beauty remaining as fresh as ever despite the excitement they might at one time have caused. Thus *the connection between musical works and specific feelings does not apply always in every case and necessarily, as an absolute imperative*…..Joy and sorrow can in the highest degree be called into life by music; to this we entirely agree. But could not even more intense feeling be caused by winning a big prize in a lottery or by the moral illness of a friend?[169] (my italics)

In this quote, the fact that different feeling are called into life by the same piece of music is ironically used to highlight his argument that there is *something unalterable* in the piece behind the variety of specific feelings associated with it. The idea is that something

[169] Ibid., p. 7.

remains unchanging no matter how many different feelings are associated with the piece, for the unchanging something depends purely on the *grammar* and *structure* of the piece. The distinction of "aesthetic judgment" and "attribution of aesthetic qualities" in the previous chapters may help us understand his point better. Applying the distinction in question to this case, it can be said that he does not deny that a variety of feelings could be associated with a certain piece as *attributions of aesthetic qualities*. However, this does not mean that there is no objective, correct aesthetic quality of the piece the perception of which depends solely on the perception of its former qualities. Only this latter sort of perception is regarded as *aesthetic perception* or *aesthetic judgment* by the formalist.

To sum up, Hanslick challenges the idea that arousing feelings is the purpose of music, by arguing that music is not special in being associated with feelings. He acknowledges that the same piece of music can be associated with a variety of feelings, and points out that this is why the following view is prevalent: music is especially good at giving rise to feelings and therefore there is a special tie between music and feelings. However, he argues that a piece's being associated with various feelings does not mean that all those feelings are aesthetically relevant; the aesthetically relevant feeling or quality is the one such that our perception of it depends entirely on our perception of the formal features discoverable in virtue of normal perceptual capacities. Thus, the fact that it appears to be easy to associate various feelings to the same piece does not justifiably lead to the view that music has a special relation to feelings, since those feelings may not be aesthetically relevant.

So far I have examined Hanslick's argument against the idea that music has a special tie to feelings. In doing so, I have shown that his musical formalism is unquestionably based on the notion of aesthetically relevant qualities of the second version of aesthetic formalism which I formulated as the philosophically interesting one. My interpretation of the formalist notion of aesthetically relevant qualities in the previous section is that they are qualities discoverable simply by our examination of the work itself in virtue of our normal perceptual capacities and without the help of outside researches or inferences.

6.2.4

The second argument which is noticed by Hanslick as commonly used in support of the close relationship between music and feeling maintains that the *content* of music is human feeling. Against this, Hanslick points out:

> There has been considerable agreement that the whole gamut of human feelings is the content of music….In this view, tones and their elaborate combination would be nothing more than raw material, the medium of expression, by means of which the composer represents love, courage, piety, rapture….In order to get on firm ground, we must first relentlessly get rid of such tired cliché. Whispering? Yes, but not the yearning of love. Violence? Of course, but certainly not the conflict. *Music can, in fact, whisper, rage, and rustle. But love and anger occur only within our hearts.* The representation of a specific feeling or emotional state is not at all among the characteristic powers of music. That is to say, the feelings are not so isolated in the mind that they have made themselves the salient feature of an art to which the representation of the other mental activities is closed. They are, on the contrary, dependent upon physiological and pathological conditions. They depend upon ideas, judgments, and the whole range of intelligible and rational thought, to which some people so readily oppose feeling.[170] (my italics)

His idea here is that music can convey "whispering" but not the "yearning of love", for music has no power to represent a specific feeling or emotional state such as love. In other words, music can "whisper, rage, and rustle" but cannot represent "love and anger", for the latter sort of feelings or qualities can only be attributed to the piece by our taking into account something other than our perception of its formal qualities, for example, certain ideas, judgments, and thoughts. One may interpret this passage as his having a broader scope than the kind of formalism of my focus; again, he may appear to acknowledge the possibility that associations with something other than our perception of formal qualities may give rise to such feelings as love and anger. Does this mean that his notion of aesthetically relevant qualities is different from the one I attributed to most major formalists?

I do not think so. His granting that a certain sort of feeling can be aroused by being related to such things as ideas, judgments, or thoughts is intended to point out that those feelings are not musically or aesthetically important; in a word, we are not encouraged to appreciate them in music. Only such feelings or qualities as "whispering",

[170] Ibid., pp. 8-9.

"rage", and "rustling" and the like can be said to be expressed by music itself, since they depend purely upon the relevant formal qualities. He says that there is a certain range of ideas that music can give rise to, and they are "simply all those ideas which are related to *audible changes in strength, motion, and proportion*; and consequently they include our ideas of *increase and diminishing, acceleration and deceleration, clever interweaving, simple progressions*, and the like.[171] (my italics)" And under this range of ideas, he includes passion, softness, powerfulness, delicateness, etc., which, according to him, depends only upon the sort of audible changes he mentions in the above.

While music cannot represent "love" itself, he points out that there is something that music may represent, express, or give rise to concerning "love", namely, the *dynamic*, *motion* or *intensity* of "love". And he also says that the same agitated dynamic of a piece of music can be associated with both "love" and "anger". From this he concludes that the proper feeling expressed by the piece is merely "agitation", and it is by our relating it to something perceptually unavailable to us at the moment of encountering the piece that we come to say that it expresses "love" or "anger". Notice here that this is again in line with the distinction of "aesthetic judgment" and "attribution of aesthetic qualities" that I find essential in aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience. To say that the music sounds agitated is to make an aesthetic judgment in this case, while to say that the music sounds angry is to attribute an aesthetic quality. In a word, according to him, only the dynamic of a feeling (e.g., soft, powerful, delicate, agitated, etc.) can be expressed in virtue of the formal qualities of music.

So far I have examined his rejection of the two arguments asserting a close relation between music and feeling. While examining this, I intended to deal with the second possible criticism to my project, i.e., that there seems to be no formalist theory based on the notion of aesthetically relevant qualities that I maintain to be held by most formalists. To put it differently, the criticism says that my interpretation of the formalist notion of aesthetically relevant qualities is simply too naïve, due to the element of "direct" or "immediate" awareness, and as a consequence it is not likely to be used in major formalist theories. In response to this, I discussed Hanslick's musical formalism to show that a formalist theory as standard and influential as his is indeed based on the

[171] Ibid., p. 10.

notion of aesthetically relevant qualities that I took to be central to formalists. In particular, he uses the notion of "direct" or "immediate" awareness, which I showed to be essential to the formalist notion of aesthetically relevant qualities, in his rejection of the view that there is a special tie between music and feeling. My examination of his arguments also shows that the "direct" or "immediate" fashion in question is not as naïve or simple as it may seem at first glance.

Thus, since his notion of aesthetically relevant qualities corresponds to my characterization of how major formalists conceive of them, the sort of things he lists as aesthetically relevant also corresponds to the sort of things taken to be aesthetically relevant in my characterization of aesthetic formalism. And this is clearly shown in the following quote from Hanslick.

> By this we understand a beauty that is self-contained and in no need of content from outside itself, that consists simply and solely of tones and their artistic combination. Relationships, fraught with significance, of sounds which are in themselves charming – their congruity and opposition, their separating and combining, their soaring and subsiding – this is what comes in spontaneous forms before our inner contemplation and pleases us as beautiful.[172]

6.2.5

The second objection may still find problems in my interpretation of the formalist notion of aesthetically relevant qualities, even though I have succeeded in showing that the notion indeed plays a crucial role in a standard formalist theory as Hanslick's. Consider this. Most formalist theories regard "calm", "turbulent", "bouncy" and so on as descriptions meaningfully applicable to passages of music. Then what makes us recognize the *aptness* of such descriptions? It is certainly impossible without lots of previous *extra-musical experiences and associations*. Thus, it can be argued that some sort of resemblances between musical passages that we appropriately describe as "turbulent" and literally agitated bodies of water help us see the aptness of the description. With this point, some may object to my characterization of aesthetic formalism, claiming that there cannot be any formalist theory taking extra-musical experiences as aesthetically

[172] Ibid., p. 28.

irrelevant. This is because doing so will prevent aesthetic formalism from explaining how we come to see the *aptness* of judging something as "turbulent".

As this objection observes, Hanslick and other formalists indeed talk about extra-musical experiences and associations, since without them our ability to adequately describe a piece of music as "calm" or "turbulent" and to recognize the aptness of it is apparently impossible. This tendency is also found in aesthetic supervenience theorists who frequently talk about cases "outside" the realm of art; "outside" in the sense that their examples are drawn from objects and events in "real life" as opposed to "works of art". For example, facial expressions are frequently mentioned by aesthetic supervenience theorists in support of their argument that we perceive the quality "turbulent" in virtue of perceiving certain features of the face, such as the tension between the brows and the way the lips are closed and so on. Another example frequently used by both aesthetic formalists and supervenience theorists is the resemblance between a sad musical passage and the way a sad person moves or poses.

However, what they take into account in showing the resemblance between certain extra-musical experiences and a sad musical passage are still their *perceptual formal qualities.* For example, the sort of things that we need to pay attention to so as to see the "turbulence" of a river, under Hanslick's theory, can hardly be anything other than its formal perceptual qualities, that is, those features perceptually available to us in virtue of our normal sensory capacities but without the help of extra researches or inferences. Therefore, according to Hanslick's theory, such things as what kind of movement is generated on the surface of the water, how fast the current moves, how intensely the splash is produced and so on are the sort of things that make us perceive the "turbulence" of the river. I cannot think of any other features than these which are consistent with Hanslick's theory. And after noticing this sort of perceptual formal qualities of the river as well as perceiving it as turbulent, we can try to relate this "extra-musical" experience to our experience of a musical piece. If this comparison shows enough resemblances between the river and the musical piece with respect to their formal perceptual features such as their movement, speed, intensity and the like, then the resemblances can be used to support our judging the piece as "turbulent".

Notice here that our judgment is made possible by referring to something *extra-musical,* i.e., certain features of the river, but what we pay attention to are still of formal perceptual kind, such as movement, intensity, speed, pattern and the like. Thus, "extra-musical" (or "extra-work of art") experiences that formalists and aesthetic supervenience theorists talk about are still *perceptual formal features* of extra-musical objects. Thus, the expression, "extra-musical", used by the line of objection in question simply refers to ordinary objects and events, as opposed to works of art, but not "non-formal" things.

Aesthetic formalism, according to my interpretation, claims that one's aesthetic judgment of something as "turbulent", regardless of whether it is a piece of music or a river, depends upon the individual's perception of its formal qualities. A formalist of this kind would explain our perception of sadness in a face in terms of our perception of the droopy lines of the eyes, the tension between the brows and so on; and she would also account for our perception of sadness in a piece of music by referring to our perception of some formal qualities of the piece which may resemble the droopy lines of the sad-looking face. In sum, regardless of whether the formalist deals with a musical or an extra-musical object, she will consider only its formal qualities as aesthetically relevant.

6.3

6.3.1

So far I have discussed two possible objections to my project. The first objection questions the purpose of my examining aesthetic formalism, pointing out that it is no longer taken seriously these days after having been sufficiently refuted already. The second possible objection challenges my interpretation of the formalist notion of aesthetically relevant qualities, claiming that my interpretation is just so naïve or simple that no actual formalist is likely to be committed to such a limited view. Now I want to examine the third line of objection that might be raised against my project, which goes as follows: even if most formalist theories give support to my characterization of aesthetic formalism, my focus should be on showing the implausibility of the distinction between first- and second-order aesthetic qualities, the backbone of the theory, from the beginning. Why not simply reject the distinction? Why bother to show that aesthetic formalism and

the theory of aesthetic supervenience are committed to a version of psychological individualism, when the dubiousness of the distinction is enough to refute them? I can respond to these questions by simply noting that my goal was not just to refute these aesthetic theories. However, I shall offer a few words about the distinction itself as the objector wants.

Here is one argument put forth to show how problematic the distinction is. According to aesthetic supervenience theorists, "red" is a non-aesthetic quality (i.e., first-order aesthetic quality in my terminology) due to its not requiring more than ordinary capacities of vision. But is it really non-aesthetic? Think about this sort of judgments such as "How loud!", "How yellow!" directed towards a work of art to capture, say, the refreshing, impressive impact of the loudness or yellowness. In this case, it seems very difficult to tell whether "loud" is aesthetic or non-aesthetic. Should we say that it can be both?[173] With this point, some authors may argue that the dubiousness of the distinction itself is enough to dismiss both aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience, and that my attempt to link them to psychological individualism is quite unnecessary. In a word, rejecting the distinction from the beginning is the easiest way to refute them.

I agree with this point that the distinction itself is not so clear as to provide definite standards or definitions for drawing it. Thus, revealing how problematic the distinction is may be enough if my goal was to refute them. However, refuting them is not my goal, and I believe that my examination on the distinction will bring to light the following insight into aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience: they are all committed to a version of psychological individualism, due to the individualistic relation they assume to hold between our perceptions of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities. As I mentioned in 6.1, this point has not been discussed by others, mainly owing to the fact that psychological individualism was not conceptualized as a particular picture of the mental until the appearance of psychological externalism. And what I aim to do is to examine the three sorts of aesthetic theories under discussion in light of the opposition of externalism and individualism recently recognized in the philosophy of

[173] Eaton, M. (1994) "The Intrinsic, Non-Supervenient Nature of Aesthetic Properties", *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 52, pp. 383-397.

mind. I believe that this reveals some interesting new characters of those aesthetic theories, since this approach has not been applied to them yet.

Furthermore, as I discussed in chapter 5, the individualistic relation assumed of our perceptions of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities in aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience can be seen to have originated in one of the philosophical tendencies of modern aesthetics, namely, the tendency to look into what occurs "inside" the perceiver. Now we can say that the individualistic relation in question has been consistently employed in aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience, and that its primary tendency to look at what is going on inside the perceiver has been predominant in western aesthetics since the aesthetic theories of modern philosophers. And this consistency tells me that there is something intuitive about the assumed individualistic relation. In other words, we seem to find the individualistic character of the relation intuitively too plausible to be open to critical attention, and one of my goals is to examine exactly what lies behind this intuition. Thus, in the next chapter, I will show that one of the intuitions which plays a crucial role in building modern epistemology (e.g., Cartesian epistemology) is also essentially operative in this individualistic relation in question. I believe that this will provide a better understanding of western aesthetics since the modern period.

6.3.2

There is another reason why I did not dismiss the distinction between first- and second-order aesthetic qualities in examining the aesthetic theories under discussion. As I have already mentioned in the previous sections, it is true that a certain sort of cultural training is accepted by formalists and aesthetic supervenience theorists as playing a role in our perception of aesthetically relevant qualities. For example, we consider a certain range of hues, saturations, and brightness as red in accordance with how our culture conditions us, and thus which range is associated with a certain color can differ from culture to culture. The ability to see three-dimensionality on a flat surface can be another example. In other words, they all acknowledge that there is no such thing as redness itself, and it is through

some sort of conceptualizing or interpreting the relevant sensory stimuli that we get to have the notion of red.

Given this, one might wonder whether the view held by formalists and aesthetic supervenience theorists is indeed philosophically interesting. For, if they already concede that perceiving aesthetically relevant qualities is partly determined by being familiarized with certain factors "outside" the work, while holding its formal features as the most important determining factor, then it becomes a triviality that few people would disagree with. As a consequence, their view loses its argumentative edge to deserve a serious philosophical discussion.

My response to this is that their view is still philosophically worth investigating for the following reason. Even though they have no problem in admitting certain ranges of previous cultural conditionings as a requisite for perceiving *formal* or *first-order aesthetic qualities* (e.g., color, three-dimensionality, tone, etc.), the argument they advance has more to do with the *relation* between perceptual experiences of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities, which leads to the following conclusion: *once two people come to have an agreement in perception about the first-order aesthetic qualities of an object, then the contents of their second-order aesthetic judgments will be the same.*

In sum, aesthetic formalists and supervenience theorists admit that seeing certain sensory stimuli as red, yellow, straight, or curvy (i.e., first-order aesthetic qualities) requires some sort of previous cultural conditioning. However, when it comes to the *relation* between perceptions of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities, they argue that one's aesthetic judgment of a certain second-order aesthetic quality is entirely determined by her perception of the relevant first-order aesthetic qualities. Regarding those cases in which this relation does not seem to hold, they say that we are merely *attributing* a second-order aesthetic quality, instead of making an aesthetic judgment or perceiving it for ourselves.

6.4

Let me summarize this chapter in which I respond to the three anticipated objections to my project. Beginning with the third objection, it challenges my attempt to show that

aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience assume an individualistic relation between perceptions of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities. To be precise, it claims that I should focus on revealing the implausibility of the distinction from the beginning.

In response to this, I granted that it would indeed be an effective way if my goal was to refute them. However, that is not my goal. My goal is to show that those aesthetic theories can all be reconstructed as a version of psychological individualism, owing to the individualistic picture they assume concerning the relation between our perceptions of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities. It is true that this reconstruction can be used to refute them in a significant way, for it will put those aesthetic theories in opposition to the externalist picture of the mind, which is widely acknowledged as doing justice to ways in which we characterize the content of an individual's mental state. I will briefly talk about this in the final chapter, but what I want to emphasize at this point is that refuting them is not the ultimate goal of my project. Instead, I want to examine what intuitions lie behind the individualistic assumption in these aesthetic theories.

Secondly, even though the acceptance of certain sorts of cultural conditioning in perceiving *first-order aesthetic qualities* seems to suggest that externalist wisdom is already incorporated in these theories, making them somewhat trivial in the sense that there is not much to argue about them (that is, they have best of both worlds), the assumed individualistic *relation* between perceptions of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities is still interesting. What makes the relation interesting is that it does not allow any outside factors than our perception of first-order aesthetic qualities to determine our perception of second-order aesthetic qualities. I believe that my placing these aesthetic theories in a direct conflict with psychological externalism, by way of reformulating them as a version of psychological individualism, will lead to some new insights about how we view aesthetic judgments and perceptions.

That refuting these aesthetic theories is not my goal is also used in my response to the first objection. The first objection questions the point of examining aesthetic formalism again when it seems that it has been sufficiently refuted already.

Moving to the second objection, it raises a question whether there is indeed any formalist theory in accordance with the second version of aesthetic formalism which I

formulated as the philosophically interesting version. I responded to this objection by showing that a formalist theory as standard and influential as Hanslick's gives support to my formulation of aesthetic formalism. To be precise, I showed that the notion of aesthetically relevant qualities which plays a crucial role in my formulation of the philosophically interesting aesthetic formalism is found in Hanslick's theory.

Conclusion

1.

I have examined the three groups of aesthetic theories that I take to be the main constituents of western aesthetics since the modern period, i.e., aesthetic formalism, the theory of aesthetic supervenience, and modern aesthetics, through a lens taken from the debate between externalism and individualism in the philosophy of mind. Although these aesthetic theories have already been critically discussed and assessed by many authors for their significant status in western aesthetics, I observed that a perspective derived from the debate between externalism and individualism concerning mental contents can provide us with new insights that illuminate the nature of and connection between these aesthetic theories. The debate started with the emergence of the externalist picture of the mental in the late 20th century, a picture that is in conflict with most major theories of the mental prior to it, such theories as the traditional Cartesianism, Berkeleyan or Leibnizian idealism, and more recently, materialist reductionism, behaviorism, functionalism and the like. In other words, the fact that these theories are committed to a particular picture of the mental, i.e., individualism, had not been recognized before they were placed in contrast with externalism.

The fact that the individualistic picture of the mental came to be noticeable after the appearance of externalism and the resulting contrast between them, which is a quite recent event, explains why the perspective I derived from the debate has not been employed by others in examining the three groups of aesthetic theories. These theories' not having been discussed in light of the debate also has to do with the obvious fact that their psychological nature has not been noticed. For this reason, the debate has been repeatedly used by philosophers in their critical reexaminations of the past theories of mind, knowledge, and meaning and so on, while aesthetics has been outside this philosophical current. My project thus started with an understanding that these aesthetic theories are psychological in character. That is to say, even though they are theories of "art", "beauty", or "aesthetic qualities", they can be understood as based on a particular picture of the mental, specifically, individualism, and thus are in conflict with

externalism. Just as the debate has enabled us to have a critical look back at the dominant theories of mind, knowledge, meaning, etc., from Cartesianism to quite recent theories, I used the debate to fashion a reflective reconstruction of the three aesthetic theories in question, thereby hoping to gain insights into their characteristics and interconnections. In a word, my project provides us with a better understanding of western aesthetics since the modern era, by means of characterizing the three aesthetic theories as based on a particular picture of the mental, with the help of a perspective derived from the recent debate between externalism and individualism in the philosophy of mind.

Thus, in chapters 3, 4, and 5, I showed that aesthetic formalism, the theory of aesthetic supervenience, and modern aesthetics can be fruitfully understood as psychological in character. After this, I argued, firstly, that the more recent two theories are committed to the same version of psychological individualism, sharing the same individualistic assumption concerning the relation between perceptions of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities, and secondly, that even though the sort of individualism in modern aesthetics is different from the sort of individualism in the later two theories, the former provides a set of assumptions and constraints for adequate solutions to their problems.

It is with modern aesthetics advanced by several 18th century philosophers such as Hume, Mendelssohn and Kant that the importance of the state of mind in making aesthetic judgments became a central subject in western aesthetics. Most ancient and medieval thinkers prior to them did not attempt to explain beauty or the aesthetic by examining the perceiver's psychological characteristics. In a word, aesthetics prior to the modern era was not psychological in character. For example, for the Pythagoreans, beauty is an objective property inherent in an object; it is a perfection in the object, such as harmony or symmetry, which in turn is determined mathematically by number, measure, or proportion. Socrates' functionalist notion of beauty has no psychological element either, for it says that a thing is beautiful when it is well-suited for its purpose. It is less obvious how some other ancient and medieval notions are not psychological in character. For example, Plato's discussion of how our soul is led by encountering beautiful physical objects to appreciate higher, superior degrees of beauty, or the

Sophists' notion that beautiful things are those that please our ears and eyes, seem quite similar to the moderns' psychological conception of the beautiful.

However, as I discussed in the introduction, there is a fundamental difference between these two views and the psychological approach used by the moderns. What distinguishes the moderns most clearly from the previous thinkers is their goal; the moderns attempted to establish the objectivity of an aesthetic judgment by making it dependent upon a certain particular state of mind. For this reason, they did an in-depth investigation on the psychological features of one's state of mind in making aesthetic judgments. We cannot find such an investigation in the Sophists' or Plato's aesthetics. Plato's discussion of how our soul is led to appreciate the Idea of beauty is more spiritual in character than it is psychological, and the Sophists did not bother to spell out the psychological characteristics of our aesthetic experiences, for their relativistic view of beauty does not require any further psychological investigation than simply pointing out that what pleases one individual may not please another.

Turning to Hume, the first modern aesthetician that I discussed in chapter 5, we can clearly notice how his way of looking at the aesthetic breaks away from the aforementioned approaches, for he argues that the essential requirement for making a correct aesthetic judgment is the obtaining of a sound state of the inner organs. According to Hume, if people can so manage their inner organs on which their "mental tastes" depend that these organs remain in their optimal state, then the universality of their aesthetic judgments can be achieved. And he believes that a standard of taste can be derived from such uniformity or universality of aesthetic judgments. What should be noticed in Hume's aesthetics is that the sort of taste that he encourages us to have has little to do with some refined skills that you might obtain through privileged cultural training. Instead it has to do with the power to guard your "mental palate" against the influences of external or internal interferences, such as your former education, opinions adopted through authorities, stress, a personal interest in the object, and so on.

Mendelssohn develops this idea, i.e., that a sound state of mind is required for making "true" aesthetic judgments, in an interesting way when he attempts to account for our enjoyments of the ugly. This is done by adding a reflective element to the idea. His explanation of why we sometimes feel pleasure from ugly or terrifying objects is that

they stimulate the mind to the point at which the purpose or nature of the mind gets fulfilled, which the mind itself perceives as its perfection. Thus, despite the lack of any perfection in themselves, some ugly objects have a power to wake up our soul from boredom, leading our mind to its perfection. In sum, Mendelssohn argues that, in experiencing some ugly objects, it is our perception of the perfection of our own mind, not the perfection of those objects, that produces pleasurable feelings in us.

This reflective aspect is taken up by Kant in his mature theory of the judgment of the beautiful. Kant explains our judgment of an object that it is beautiful in terms of our reflective judgment on our own state of mind in experiencing the object. We judge the object to be beautiful by virtue of perceiving the perfection of our own mind, not the perfection of the object. The mind compares the workings of imagination and understanding when they are confronted with the beautiful, with the workings of those faculties when they are involved in cognition in general. Through this comparison the mind comes to realize the similarity between the former state and the latter, and since the latter is already considered by the mind as the "ideal" state, the mind also notices some perfection in the former, which leads us to judge that the object we encounter is beautiful. In other words, the verdict of an aesthetic judgment, on Kant's view, depends on the mind's reflective judgment directed towards its own states and activity.

My discussion of the aesthetic theories of these modern philosophers was intended to highlight their tendency to refer to what is internally going on in the perceiver in their accounts of the nature of aesthetic judgments. In Kant's aesthetics, in which this tendency culminates, one's aesthetic judgment of an object that it is beautiful is decided independently of the environment in which the individual is embedded, for it is decided purely in virtue of the individual's reflective perception of what takes place in her mind. And I believe that the later two theories, i.e., aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience, which are among the most debated topics respectively in art criticism and the analytic tradition of aesthetics in the 20th century, can be seen as an extension or a development of this tendency in modern aesthetics. It is true that the sort of individualism in modern aesthetics is different from the one in these later two theories. The individualistic assumption shared by the later two is specifically about the relation between perceptions of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities, while the sort of

individualism in modern aesthetics is employed to establish a rational and objective basis for aesthetic judgments by maintaining that a rational and objective aesthetic judgment is a judgment a fully rational mind could assent to in isolation, independent of the community at large. However, I believe that aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience are closely related to modern aesthetics in that the tendency to focus on the intrinsic data of the individual in these theories can be seen as derived from the sort of individualism characteristic of modern aesthetics.

With this in mind, let us revisit chapter 3 in which I showed that there are two versions of aesthetic formalism, advisory and psychological aesthetic formalism. I argued that even though most major formalist theories are a mixture of both, it is only the latter version which is of philosophical interest. I made it clear that the first version, advisory aesthetic formalism, is not the subject of my project, since it can be interpreted as some sort of suggestion or recommendation intended to help us have a better aesthetic experience. My analysis was that it advises us to focus on formal qualities only, for not doing so may lead us to use works of art for certain ulterior purposes, ultimately resulting in unworthy, impure aesthetic experiences. As I said, it is hard to deny the value that advisory aesthetic formalism might have, as advice, to people who are intent on enriching their aesthetic experiences, and thus I believe that the proper realm to which discussions about this sort of formalism belong is art criticism or education.

The second version, however, makes use of a certain descriptive claim about aesthetically relevant qualities, and thus is open to a critical and *philosophical* examination. According to the second version, which I call psychological aesthetic formalism, we should focus on formal qualities only because no other qualities than those are aesthetically relevant. What is crucial in this version is unquestionably the formalist notion of aesthetically relevant qualities, which I characterized in the following two ways. Formalists sometimes speak of aesthetically relevant qualities as qualities "in" works of art in that we can discover them simply by examining the work itself with the help of our perceptual capacities and without the help of outside sources. Another way of conceiving aesthetically relevant qualities is that they are qualities "directly" presented to our perception in the sense that we do not make use of inferences or conjectures in perceiving them. Formal qualities such as colors, lines, shapes, textures and the like are considered

to satisfy these conditions, but the need to explain such qualities as "violent", "vivid", "calm", "delicate" and the like arises for the formalist, since they frequently mention these qualities along with purely formal qualities in their critiques or reviews of actual works of art. Regarding this, I argued in chapter 3 that the formalist way of making sense of judgments involving these qualities reveals the following assumption: an individual's aesthetic judgment (i.e., a judgment accompanied with the relevant aesthetic experience in which the individual perceives the quality in question for himself) of a work of art that it has a certain second-order aesthetic quality depends only on the individual's perception of the first-order aesthetic qualities of the work.

This assumption is obviously individualistic in character. It says that the content of a mental state (i.e., the content of a second-order aesthetic judgment) is purely determined by factors non-intentionally characterized of a subject, that is, the subject's perceptual experience of the first-order aesthetic qualities (to be precise, the physical or phenomenal nature of the perception, excluding the intentional one). And I find that this assumption, which is implicitly employed in aesthetic formalism, becomes fully explicit in the theory of aesthetic supervenience.

As I said in the beginning of chapter 4, aesthetic supervenience theorists make it clear from the beginning that their investigation is focused on the nature of the relationship between first- and second-order aesthetic qualities. What I showed in chapter 4 is that they can be seen as particularly interested in the relation between our *perceptions* of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities and advancing a psychological thesis about this relation. Aesthetic supervenience theorists clearly state that they exclude cases in which we seem to apply aesthetic terms or make judgments without being able to have the relevant perceptual experiences for ourselves. These cases, they say, should be called "attributions of aesthetic qualities" rather than "aesthetic judgments", and are not relevant to the issues at hand. With this point agreed upon, they move on to examine whether one's second-order aesthetic judgment of an object can be determined by the individual's perception of the first-order aesthetic qualities.

My examination of the three aesthetic supervenience theorists, Sibley, Beardsley and Kivy, showed that their views are based on the same individualistic assumption that I found in aesthetic formalism. Kivy's view coincides exactly with the assumption in

question. He argues that if a set of certain first-order aesthetic qualities is required for a certain second-order aesthetic quality to occur, then your perceiving the set guarantees your perceiving the second-order aesthetic quality. In other words, the set is not only the occurrent condition for the quality, but also the condition for our perception of the quality. The view held by Sibley and Beardsley seems, at first, to have nothing to do with the individualistic assumption in question. For they claim that perceiving a certain second-order aesthetic quality cannot be guaranteed by perceiving the relevant first-order aesthetic qualities, unless you are a possessor of properly working taste. In other words, their main reason for being skeptical about the possibility of application conditions is the difficulty of everyone's having sound taste.

However, the conclusion I reached is that this view is as individualistic as Kivy's, due to the requirement that your taste should be in a state of proper functioning. What is implied in their view is that if there are two individuals whose inner states are in the same sound state for making aesthetic judgments, owing to the proper, natural workings of their tastes, then they will both judge an object as having the same second-order aesthetic quality, which is the correct judgment, given that they have perceived the same first-order aesthetic qualities of the object. And this corresponds exactly to the individualistic feature in Kivy's theory, not to mention to the one in aesthetic formalism. It holds that the content of a second-order aesthetic judgment is entirely determined by a certain intrinsic data of the individual. To be precise, the content of an individual's second-order aesthetic judgment is determined by the combination of the right state of the individual's taste organ and the sensory intakes of first-order aesthetic qualities processed by the organ.

This view held by Beardsley and Sibley specifies an additional determining factor for the content of a second-order aesthetic judgment when compared to Kivy's, but they all share the same individualistic assumption. For both Kivy and Beardsley/Sibley, the mental content of an individual's second-order aesthetic judgment is determined by only that which is internal to her and non-intentionally characterized. For Kivy, what matters are the sensory intakes of first-order aesthetic qualities, while Beardsley and Sibley add the right state of taste as an additional determining factor.

This inclusion of the sound state of taste shows that the idea can be traced back to the discussion of taste in modern aesthetics that I presented in chapter 5. In this sense, the

view held by Beardsley and Sibley still retains the essential element of modern aesthetics. On the other hand, Kivy refuses to talk about such a thing as taste, for he believes that it is not because of the proper function of the mental palate that we get to perceive aesthetic qualities, but our being rational is enough to perceive them. Despite this variance, however, I believe that their views can be seen as sharing the same individualistic assumption with aesthetic formalism. Again, according to the assumption in question, an individual's judgment of an object that it has a certain second-order aesthetic quality depends on the individual's perception of the first-order aesthetic qualities of the object.

I find it very intriguing that this shared individualistic feature between aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience and its connection to the sort of individualism in modern aesthetics has not been discussed so far by others. Some aesthetic supervenience theorists claim that they are formalists, but it is typically because of their overall agreement with the formalist agenda, not because they notice that their theories in fact share the same individualistic assumption with aesthetic formalism. This becomes more interesting if we consider the fact that the theory of aesthetic supervenience appeared almost a couple of decades after aesthetic formalism had lost its dominance. Aesthetic formalism was simply not viable as a valid theory of art criticism at the time when a whole new field of philosophical discussion showing the same individualistic feature as aesthetic formalism emerged. This suggests to me that the shared feature was not noticed by either group; if it had been, a question would have been raised as to the purpose of the theory of aesthetic supervenience. Philosophers would have been led to question whether aesthetic supervenience theorists attempt to justify the individualistic feature in aesthetic formalism so as to revive the latter. However, as far as I have researched, this line of questioning has not been raised, and thus it seems that the two groups of theories were advanced without being conscious of their connection to each other.

In brief, the fact that they were advanced separately leads me to think that the shared individualistic feature was not noticed. That is to say, aesthetic supervenience theorists were not conscious that they were actually launching an in-depth investigation of the very link between perceptions of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities which plays a crucial role in aesthetic formalism. There must be a reason for this. My view is

that the individualistic feature in question is so intuitively natural to us that we hardly pay attention to it when it is assumed, not to mention have a critical look at it. In other words, some of our intuitions seem to be well integrated with the individualistic feature in question. And this seems to explain why the feature reappeared in the theory of aesthetic supervenience, after the theory in which it played an important role, aesthetic formalism, had fallen out of favor.

Now placing this in a broader picture of the history of aesthetics, I find that both aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience can be seen as an extension or a development of the individualistic streak in modern aesthetics. That is to say, even though the sort of individualism in modern aesthetics did not concern the particular relation between our perceptions of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities, but was intended to find a rational basis for aesthetic judgments, the tendency to focus on what is internally happening in an individual in the later two theories can be said to be derived from the sort of individualism found in modern aesthetics. The objective aesthetic judgment in modern aesthetics is conceived of as a judgment that a fully rational mind could assent to in isolation, independent of the characters of the community at large. And what makes a fully rational mind assent to it in isolation is claimed to be the proper state of her internal organs or faculties. This tendency of referring to what is internally going on in the individual is also found in the two recent theories, with a particular focus on the relation between perceptions of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities. Thus, according to aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience, the content of one's aesthetic judgment is determined independently of the characters of the environment in which the individual is embedded. In sum, examining the intrinsic facts of an individual has been a recurring tendency throughout western aesthetics since the modern period, and thus the individualistic assumption in the later two theories can be seen as derived from the individualistic streak in modern aesthetics.

2.

Now I want to present my view on why the above individualistic feature underlying the three sorts of aesthetic theories has not been given due attention. As I mentioned in the

previous section, it seems to me that we find it intuitively so natural that it keeps reappearing through the ebb and flow of different aesthetic theories spread over more than two centuries. To talk about what exactly is intuitive in those aesthetic theories, I have to briefly go back to chapter 2 in which I presented Burge's argument that the individualistic picture of the mental is a product of unjustified inferences starting from some of our entrenched intuitions. He observes that the famous Cartesian thought experiment capitalizes on those intuitions, and that it is in virtue of them that the thought experiment seems compelling to us at first glance. He argues, however, that those intuitions do not justifiably lead to individualism, contrary to what the individualist often believes.

The first intuition employed in the Cartesian thought experiment is that different causal antecedents could issue in the same physical effects on the individual's body; the second says that one could be drastically wrong about the nature of the empirical world around one; and according to the third, an individual has a direct and authoritative access to the contents of their own thoughts. Lastly, he observes that the most primitive and basic intuition which concerns the nature of perceptual experiences goes as follows: we could have the same perceptual experiences, whether they are veridical, illusory or hallucinatory. In other words, they are experiences of essentially the same kind in that they have the same phenomenology of experience. As I discussed in chapter 2, Burge examines each one and shows that accepting such intuitions does not justifiably lead to the individualistic picture of the mind. Individualism requires more justification than what those intuitions provide.

After this, I moved on to show that the standard views of perception, such as the sense-data theory, the adverbial theory, and some intentionalist theories which have not been challenged until quite recently, are good examples in which the sort of individualistic inference starting from the fourth intuition is employed. The inference in the standard views of perception can be summarized as follows: from the sameness of phenomenology between veridical, hallucinatory, and illusory perceptions, it can be derived that the intentional content of an individual's perceptual experience is independent of the nature of the individual's environment.

Now I want to relate this inference found in the standard views of perception to the three sorts of aesthetic theories. In doing so, I hope to shed light on why the individualistic feature shared by those aesthetic theories is hard to notice. The fourth intuition is regarded by Burge as the most primitive and basic among those intuitions operative in the Cartesian thought experiment. That is to say, a considerable force of the persuasiveness of the thought experiment seems to be drawn from the fourth intuition. In fact, the idea that two identical phenomenal states can have different intentional characters or perceptual contents, due to the difference in the perceiver's environment, does not seem to appeal to us right away; for, are they not *identical* anyway in their phenomenology, "what they are like" to us? The plausible conclusion that should be inferred from the indistinguishable phenomenology of my veridical and hallucinatory perceptions of an oasis seems to be that they have the same intentional perceptual content.[174] The force of this intuition explains the predominance of the standard views of perception, which have not challenged until quite recently. And now I want to argue that the three groups of aesthetic theories can be seen as including the illegitimate inference which shows up in the standard views of perception.

Let me briefly recap my argument in chapter 2 that the standard views of perception can be seen as good examples of the individualistic inference, the premise of which is the fourth intuition in the Cartesian thought experiment. First, it can be said that a standard theory of perception in general is an attempt to make sense of the experiential indistinguishability between veridical perception and hallucination/illusion. "How can we tell that this perception is veridical while the other is a hallucination, when their experiential or phenomenological characters are indistinguishable?" is the initial puzzle that the sense-data theory, the adverbial theory, and the intentionalist theory of perception set out to deal with. And since this notion of experiential indistinguishability between veridical and hallucinatory/illusory perceptions corresponds exactly to the fourth intuition

[174] Let me briefly explain this term. The term "intentional content" is originally used by intentionalists to constitute their distinction of intentional content and phenomenal character. Thus, I do not think it will do complete justice to use the same term to refer to the content of a perceptual experience conceived in the sense-data and the adverbial theory. A more general term, "perceptual content" will be appropriate for those two theories. However, for the purpose of convenience, I will use "intentional perceptual content" with which I will mean "intentional content" for the intentionalist theory and "perceptual content" for the sense-data and the adverbial theory.

in the Cartesian thought experiment, we can now say that the fourth intuition is indeed used as the beginning premise in those standard views of perception.

Now let us see what conclusion these theories of perception derive from the fourth intuition. First of all, the sense-data theorist maintains that we are indirectly aware of real, mind-independent objects in the world by virtue of directly perceiving sense-data. The notion of sense-data is that they are some sort of medium by means of which we experience the mind-independent world; it is a "veil of perception" always interposed between the real objects and the perceiver. Note that on this view mind-dependent things exhaust all we can be directly aware of. And according to this theory the content of an individual's perceptual experience is entirely determined by the object of the experience, which is the mind-dependent sense-datum. The sense-datum as a mind-dependent thing is an intrinsic property of the individual, having no relation to a real object in the external world. Recall that the sense-datum in a veridical perception of a dagger and that of a hallucination are the same, which means that there is no relation between the real object and the sense-data. In sum, the sense-data theory concludes that the content of a perceptual experience is entirely determined by the relevant sense-datum which is an intrinsic property of the perceiver and thus characterized independently of his environment.

Turning to the adverbial theory, we can easily observe that it derives the same conclusion from the fourth intuition, for it claims that the content of an individual's perceptual experience is determined by the specific state or manner of sensory awareness of the individual, that is, the modification of the experience itself. And just as in the sense-data theory, the modification of an experience is characterized independently of the perceiver's environment, for adverbial theorists believe that the real object in the external world has no relation to the nature of the modification. Otherwise the same manner of awareness between a veridical perception and a hallucination of a tomato, say, a "roundly and reddish" state, would be impossible. Thus, the adverbial theory makes the same inference as the sense-data theory: from the experiential indistinguishability between veridical perception and illusion, it derives the conclusion that the content of a perceptual experience is entirely determined by the specific mental state or manner of sensing, an

intrinsic property of the perceiver which can be characterized independently of her environment.

Finally, regarding the intentionalist theory of perception, I argued that the same inference is found in a certain version of the intentionalist theory which claims the following: the phenomenology of an experience determines the intentional content of the experience. And if the phenomenal character in this version is claimed to be captured purely in terms of non-intentional characterizations of the individual, which is the typical approach among intentionalists, then it ultimately leads to the conclusion that the intentional content of an experience is determined in complete independence of the individual's environment. Again, we can see that the inference operative in the above two standard theories of perception is also made in this version of the intentionalist theory.

Burge takes issue with this inference and devises a thought experiment to argue that the sameness in phenomenal characters of two experiences does not guarantee the sameness in their intentional perceptual contents. In his thought experiment, two particle for particle identical individuals with the same perceptual capacities are confronted with the same physical object, and despite the sameness in their phenomenal states and in every non-intentionally describable fact about them, their intentional perceptual contents can be differently individuated or characterized due to the different natures of the environments in which they are situated.

The point that Kendall Walton puts forth in his seminal essay, "Categories of Art", gives support to Burge's thought experiment. In the essay, he advances a psychological thesis that the aesthetic qualities which an individual perceives a work as having depend on the category of art to which the individual perceives the work as belonging.

> Piano music is frequently marked *sostenuto, cantabile, legato*, or lyrical. But how can the pianist possibly carry out such instructions? Piano tones diminish in volume drastically immediately after the key is struck, becoming inaudible relatively promptly, and there is no way the player can prevent this. If a singer or violinist should produce sounds even approaching a piano's in suddenness of demise, they would be nerve-wrackingly sharp and percussive – anything but cantabile or lyrical! Yet piano music can be cantabile, legato, or lyrical nevertheless…..What makes this possible is the very fact that the drastic diminution of piano tones cannot be prevented, and hence never is……A piano passage that sounds lyrical or cantabile to us is one in which the individual tones are relatively sustained, given the capabilities of the instrument. Such a passage sounds lyrical only

> because piano music is limited as it is, and we hear it as piano music; that is, the limitations are standard properties for us. The character of the passage is determined not merely by the "absolute" nature of the sounds, but by that in relation to the standard property of what piano tones can be like.[175]

What Walton wants to argue using this example is that it is in virtue of our recognizing a passage of music as belonging to "piano music" that the passage sounds lyrical. To be more precise, our recognition that a passage belongs to the category of "piano music" whose standard property is such that tones diminish in volume drastically immediately after the key is struck plays an essential role in our perceiving the passage as lyrical. Our awareness that the piano as an instrument is limited in its capacity of sustaining its tone enables us to appreciate how relatively successful the passage is in sustaining its tones, and this is crucial for our perception of the passage as lyrical.

What we need to pay attention to at this point is that the recognition of the category and its limitation requires more than just perceiving the first-order aesthetic qualities of the piece at hand. That is to say, someone with focused attention and sharpness of ear is not guaranteed to perceive the passage as lyrical. No matter how rational he is or how sound his internal organs are, if he has no idea of what properties are considered standard in piano music, he may not be able to perceive the lyrical quality of the piece at all. Aesthetic formalists and supervenience theorists may attempt to advise the individual to listen to it multiple times with more attention. However, such advice would not help him grasp the lyrical quality of the passage, unless he gets acquainted with the typical characteristics of piano as an instrument, which may require his knowledge of, for example, how different piano is compared to violin when it comes to the matter of sustaining their tones, etc. To sum up, Walton's point can be understood as arguing that the nature of an individual's second-order aesthetic perception of a work is not entirely determined by the individual's first-order aesthetic perception of the work in front of him.

Aesthetic formalists and supervenience theorists may attempt to respond to this argument by pointing out the following: the sort of aesthetic qualities that we get to perceive by taking into account the piece's category (e.g., legato, lyrical, etc.) should be

[175] Walton, K. (1970) "Categories of Art", *Philosophical Review* 79, pp. 349-350.

distinguished from the sort of aesthetic qualities that we will perceive if we focus on the "absolute" nature of the sounds only (e.g., sharp, percussive, etc.). Can this distinction be effective in refuting Walton's argument? As I have discussed in chapters 3 and 4, the distinction accepts only the latter as "aesthetic judgment or perception", while the former is considered "attribution of aesthetic qualities" and excluded from their discussion. This obviously leads to a very odd consequence, namely, that my perception of a piece as lyrical is very likely to be just an attribution of the aesthetic quality which does not deserve to be a serious subject in discussion of aesthetic matters, and the aesthetic quality that is worth perceiving is instead sharpness or suddenness and the like.

This is of course very implausible. First of all, according to this view, sharpness, suddenness, percussiveness and so on are the sort of aesthetic qualities that deserve to be perceived in *almost all* piano music, as qualities derived from the "absolute" nature of the piano sounds, and this is simply absurd. Secondly, the idea that there is a clear and convenient way of distinguishing the sort of perception made possible in virtue of factors other than formal qualities from the sort of perception made possible by focusing on formal qualities only is also problematic. The distinction suggests that we can guard ourselves from perceiving the former sort, and it is by avoiding taking into account factors other than first-order aesthetic qualities. I grant that this may be feasible in some cases in which the "extraneous" factor in question is biographical information about the author and the like. However, for those cases where we take into account basic categories of art such as piano music, painting, sculpture, etc., it would be very difficult to exclude such a consideration while focusing on the "absolute" nature of formal qualities only.

In fact, this distinction looks very similar to one of the strategies that many individualists have taken in defending their view on mental contents. The strategy in question is their attempt to distinguish narrow content from broad content, maintaining that the narrow content of a mental state or event is determined entirely by the intrinsic data of the individual, while the broad content is determined by how the narrow content gets applied to a particular context. In other words, narrow content is a function from environments or contexts to a broad content.

This strategy, however, is nothing but problematic. Among other things, as Burge points out, the idea that there is "a convenient and natural means of segregating those

features of propositional attitudes that derive from the nature of a person's social and physical context, on one hand, from those features that derive from the organism's nature, and palpable effects of the environment on it, on the other"[176] has never been successful in finding its justification. Burge's point can aptly apply to Walton's example. Walton's point, in Burge's term, is that a factor in the individual's environment can determine the nature of the individual's perception in a fundamental way, and there is no convenient and natural means of segregating the sort of perception that derives from the nature of a person's environment from the sort of perception that is made possible purely in virtue of the individual's intrinsic data.

Now it becomes obvious that the individualistic inference in the standard views of perception conflicts with these points made by Burge and Walton. Remember, the inference goes as follows: two identical phenomenal states cannot differ in their intentional perceptual contents, for the latter is purely determined by the characters of the former; in other words, the intentional perceptual content is determined in complete independence of the nature of the perceiver's environment. And now we are in a position to point out that the inference is also buried in the shared assumption by aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience. The assumption in question holds that if two individuals' perceptions agree in the first-order aesthetic qualities of an object, then they will also have the same second-order aesthetic perceptions. It is true that the inference that Burge talks about does not exactly concern the relation between our perceptions of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities in this assumption, for the inference is about the relation between phenomenal states and intentional perceptual contents. However, I believe that the assumption in the aesthetic theories can be understood, without any danger of severe distortions, as follows: *if two individuals' phenomenal states agree in their experiences of the first-order aesthetic qualities of an object, then the intentional perceptual contents of their experiences of the second-order aesthetic qualities will be the same as well.*

To sum up, I have shown that what may seem the most intuitive and primitive inference that individualists tend to use, i.e., the inference starting with the fourth intuition in the Cartesian thought experiment, is also incorporated into the shared

[176] Burge, T. (1982) "Other Bodies", in A. Woodfield (ed.), *Thought and Object*, New York: Oxford, p. 103.

assumption in aesthetic formalism and the theory of aesthetic supervenience. The power of the inference, due to the degree of its primitive nature as Burge observes, explains why the shared assumption in those aesthetic theories has been used continuously without being noticed or critically examined. It is true that the assumption has a particular focus on the relation between perceptions of first- and second-order aesthetic qualities, and thus we cannot find the exact same assumption in modern aesthetics. However, the tendency in the assumption to refer to what is internally going on in the individual can be seen as a holdover from modern aesthetics.

As I stated earlier, it is the appearance of externalism as a conflicting picture of the mind to the previously dominant one, i.e., individualism, that provides us with a perspective to engage in a critical reconstruction of western aesthetics since the modern era. According to my reconstruction, the three major constituents of western aesthetics in modern and contemporary times, i.e., aesthetic formalism, the theory of aesthetic supervenience, and modern aesthetics, can be seen as centrally concerned with psychological issues, and the particular picture of the mind that they are all based on is individualism. And since individualism has already been shown to be the basis of most major theories of mind, knowledge, or meaning, starting from Cartesianism to theories of quite recent years, we can say that the aesthetic theories during those times were also shaped by the philosophical current in which the individualistic picture of the mind was deeply ingrained and powerfully operative.

Bibliography

Addison, J. (1712) "The Pleasures of the Imagination", *The Spectator,* nos. 411-421 (21 June – 3 July).

Albritton, R. (1959) "On Wittgenstein's Use of the Term 'Criterion'", *Journal of Philosophy* 56, pp. 845-857.

Anscombe, G.E.M. (1965) "The Intentionality of Sensation: a Grammatical Feature", in R.J. Butler (ed.), *Analytical Philosophy: First Series,* Oxford: Blackwell.

Armstrong, D.M. (1968) *A Materialist Theory of the Mind*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Ayer, A.J. (1956) *The Problem of Knowledge*, London: Macmillan.

Baumgarten, A.G. (1936 [1750, 1758]) *Aesthetica,* Bari: Jos, Laterza et Filios.

Beardsley, M.C. (1974) "The Descriptive Account of Aesthetic Attribution", *Revue International de Philosophie* 28, pp. 336-352.
_____ (1982) "What is an Aesthetic Quality?" *The Aesthetic Point of View*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
_____ (1966) *Aesthetics from Classical Greece to the Present*, New York: Macmillan.

Bell, C. (1914) *Art,* London: Chatto and Windus.

Brentano, Franz (1973 [1874]) *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoin*t, trans. by Rancurello, Terrell and McAlister, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Byrne, A. (2001) "Intentionalism Defended", *Philosophical Review* 110, pp. 199-240.

Burge, T. (1979) "Individualism and the Mental", *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* IV, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp.73-121.
_____ (1982) "Other Bodies", in A. Woodfield (ed.), *Thought and Object*: *Essays on Intentionality*, New York: Oxford.
_____ (1986) "Cartesian Error and the Objectivity of Perception", in J. McDowell and P. Pettit (eds.), *Subject, Thought, and Context*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
_____ (1986) "Individualism and Psychology", *Philosophical Review* 95, pp. 3-45.
_____ (1988) "Individualism and Self-Knowledge", *Journal of Philosophy* 85, pp. 649-663.

Burke E. (1958 [1757, 1759]) *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*, ed. by J. T. Boulton, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Carruthers, P. (2000) *Phenomenal Consciousness: A Naturalistic Theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chisholm, R. (1957) *Perceiving: A Philosophical Study*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Cohen, T. (1973) "Aesthetic/Non-aesthetic and the Concept of Taste: A Critique of Sibley's Position", *Theoria* 39, pp. 113-152.

Crawford, D. (2001) "Kant", in B. Gaut and D.M. Lopes (eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics,* Routledge: London and New York.

Descartes, R. (1985 [1637]) "Meditations on First Philosophy, Discourse on the Method", in J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff, and D. Murdoch (eds. and trans.), *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dretske, F. (1995) *Naturalizing the Mind*, Cambridge: MIT Press.

Ducasse, C.J. (1942) "Moore's Refutation of Idealism", in P. Schilpp (ed.), *The Philosophy of G.E. Moore*, Chicago: Northwestern University Press, pp. 223-252.

Eaton, M. (1994) "The Intrinsic, Non-Supervenient Nature of Aesthetic Properties", *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 52, pp. 383-397.

Farrell, B.A. (1950) "Experience", *Mind* 59, pp. 170-198.

Ferry, L. (1993) *Homo Aestheticus*, University of Chicago Press.

Goodman, N. (1968) *Languages of Art: An Approach to a Theory of Symbols*, Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company.

Hanslick, E. (1986 [1891]) *On the Musically Beautiful*, trans. and ed. by G. Payzant, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.

Hume, D. (1978 [1739-1740]) *A Treatise of Human Nature*, 2nd edition, ed. by P. Nidditch, Clarendon Press.
_____ (1985 [1757]) "Of the Standard of Taste", in E. F. Miller (ed.), *Essays, Moral, Political, Literary*, Indianapolis: Liberty Classics.

Hutcheson, F. (1974 [1725]) *An Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design,* ed. by P. Kivy, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.

Johnson, J. (2002) *Who Needs Classical Music?*, Oxford University Press.

Kant, I. (2000 [1790]) *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, trans. and eds. by P. Guyer and E. Matthews, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Kivy, P. (1975) "Aesthetics and Rationality", *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 34, pp. 51-57.
_____ (1979) "Aesthetic Concepts: Some Fresh Considerations", *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 37, pp. 423-432.

Kripke, S. (1980) Naming and Necessity, Oxford: Blackwell.

Kristeller, P. O. (1951) "The Modern System of the Arts: A Study in the History of Aesthetics", *Journal of the History of Ideas* 12, pp. 17-46 and pp. 496-527.

Levinson J. (1983) "Aesthetic Supervenience", *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 22, pp. 93-110.

McGinn, C. (1977) "Charity Interpretation and Belief", *Journal of Philosophy* 74, pp. 521-535.

McDowell, J. (1987) "Singular Thought and the Extent of Inner Space", in J. McDowell and P. Pettit (eds.), *Subject, Thought, and Context*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
_____ (1994) "The Content of Perceptual Experience", *Philosophical Quarterly* 44, pp. 206-213.

Mendelssohn, M. (1997 [1771]) "Rhapsodie or Addition to the Letters on Sentiments", in D. Dahlstrom (trans. and ed.), *Philosophical Writings,* Cambridge University Press.

Millar, A. (1996) "The Idea of Experience", *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 97, pp. 75-90.

Nagel, T. (1974) "Review of Armstrong's A Material Theory of the Mind", *Philosophical Review* 79, pp. 394-403.

Owens, J. (1994) "Psychological Externalism", *The Mind-Body Problem: A Guide to the Current Debate*, Cambridge: Blackwell.

Pitcher, G. (1970) *A Theory of Perception*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Price, H.H. (1932) *Perception*, London: Methuen.

Putnam, H. (1975) "The Meaning of 'Meaning'", *Philosophical Papers II: Mind, Language, and Reality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
_____ (1982) *Reason, Truth and History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rueger, A. (2009) "Enjoying the Unbeautiful: From Mendelssohn's Theory of 'Mixed Sentiments' to Kant's Aesthetic Judgments of Reflection", *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 67, pp. 181-189.

Russell, B. (1912) *The Problem of Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Scheman, N. (1993) "Though This be Method, Yet There is Madness in It: Paranoia and Liberal Epistemology", *Engenderings: Constructions of Knowledge, Authority, and Privilege*, New York: Routledge.

Schwyzer, H.R.G. (1963) "Sibley's 'Aesthetic Concepts'", *Philosophical Review* 72, pp. 72-78.

Scriven, M. (1959) "The Logic of Criteria", *Journal of Philosophy* 56, pp. 857-868.

Shelley, J. (2001) "Empiricism: Hutcheson and Hume", in B. Gaut and D.M. Lopes (eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics,* New York: Routledge.

Shusterman, R. (1993) "Of the Scandal of Taste: Social Privilege as Nature in the Aesthetic Theories of Hume and Kant", in P. Mattick (ed.), *Eighteenth-Century Aesthetics and the Reconstitution of Art*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sibley, F. (1959) "Aesthetic Concepts", *Philosophical Review* 68, pp. 421-450.
_____ (1965) "Aesthetic and Nonaesthetic", *Philosophical Review* 74, pp. 135-159.

Stich, S. (1978) "Autonomous Psychology and the Belief-desire Thesis", *The Monist* 61, pp. 573-591.

Tatarkiewicz, W. (1970-1974) *History of Aesthetics*, trans. and eds. by J. Harrell, C. Barrett and D. Petsch, The Hague: Mouton.

Tye, M. (2000) *Consciousness, Color and Content*, Cambridge: MIT Press.

Walton, K. (1970) "Categories of Art", *Philosophical Review* 79, pp. 334-367.

Crane, T. "The Problem of Perception", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2011 Edition),* E. N. Zalta (ed.), URL=<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/entries/perception-problem/>.

Huemer, M. "Sense-Data", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2011 Edition),* E. N. Zalta (ed.), URL=<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/entries/sense-data/>.

Siegel, S. "The Contents of Perception", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2011 Edition), E. N. Zalta (ed.), forthcoming URL=<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2011/entries/perception-contents/>.