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THE SUBSTITUTION THEORY OF ART

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§1. The Problem of Intentionality

The world is the totality of objects — things, events, processes, states — standing in certain relations to each other. Among the objects in the world are mental acts (or mental episodes in general), which have the peculiar property that through them we can become related to objects of all conceivable varieties. This occurs both immediately (in our perceiving of this table, for example) and mediately (when we think about the carpenter who built this table, or about the heaviest table in Smolensk). There is, however, a crucial difference between the two kinds of relatedness at issue here. Crudely expressed, we can say that it is only in the former case that a real link or connection to an object is in fact established. In the latter case, the acts in question manifest merely certain internal similarities to relational acts. Even here, however, the mere existence of an object will be sufficient guarantee that a relational sentence can correctly be employed to describe the directedness of the acts involved (with the implication that semantic treatments of singular intentionality may run the risk of ignoring the differences between mediately and immediately directed acts).

In the present paper I shall be concerned specifically with those anomalous mental acts or processes manifesting mediate directedness which are characterised further by the fact that they lack existing objects. Acts of this sort can occur either because we are mistaken in our belief to the effect that a putative object exists, or because we quite deliberately exercise imagination, for example when we have to do with works of art. The exercise of the imagination is of course not

1. I should like to thank Kevin Mulligan, Dieter Munch and Karl Schuhmann for their comments on an earlier version of this paper.

always a purely mental affair. It can take the form of real bodily involvement with objects serving as material props, as for example when the artist imagines how a finished painting will look by squinting at the daubings on his canvas, or when children are dancing round a 'campfire' that is constructed out of upturned umbrellas, or when theatre-goers allow themselves to become entranced by the actions on the stage. In all such cases, however, imagination is performed a special way of being directed towards existing objects, so that there will be little temptation to postulate special kinds of non-existent objects toward which the relevant acts would be directed.²

There are still, however, certain residual cases of strictly non-veridical imagining, cases where imagining is a matter of mental acts which simply lack existing objects. Here the most familiar examples are provided by the acts of apparent object-directedness which are involved in our readings of works of fiction. The acts in which we follow the adventures of Sherlock Holmes do, certainly, involve the use of real material props — the printed texts themselves — but not in such a way that these props would serve as objects. Moreover, for all their anomalous status, such acts do bear certain analogies to directly relational acts of perception or of memory, so that their linguistic expression may utilise the same relational forms that are employed in expressing object-directed acts of a more straightforward sort. This fact, too, has had unfortunate consequences for the semantic treatment of intentionality: it has led to the contrivance of ontological accounts of anomalous acts which pay too little regard to their special status.

Such accounts are a by-product of the doctrine of intentionality, the doctrine that all acts have a directedness towards an object, and that it is such directedness which marks them out as acts. This doctrine, as applied to anomalous acts, comes in two characteristic forms. The first sees the object of imagining as residing in some sense in the mind of the imagining subject. It is then as if we enjoy two kinds of relational contact with the objects of our acts: a transcendent

2. This point has been emphasised by Ryle in *The Concept of Mind*, and also by Walton, for example in his "Pictures and Make-Believe", both of whom see imagination as primarily a behavioural matter. Ryle and Walton argue that it is our capacity to pretend, or *make-believe*, in overt actions, that is the key to the understanding of the nature of imagination in general.

relational contact, where we perceive or remember real, external tables; and an immanent relational contact, where we imagine unreal, internal tables, or 'see' tables 'in the mind's eye'.³ The idea that imagination involves a relation to objects located somehow in the mind still retains its hold in common thought and speech, and indeed the very term 'imagination' carries with it the suggestion that imagining is primarily or exclusively a matter of having mental images. Yet it is an idea which can survive careful reflection only with difficulty, and it will not be considered further here.⁴

The second form of the object view is most reasonably associated with the name of Meinong, though it originated in Twardowski's *On the Content and Object of Presentations* of 1894.⁵ This second view seeks to preserve the conception of intentional directedness as amounting in every case to a relation between an act and some transcendent target. It therefore embraces an ontology of acts and transcendent objects, but the latter are divided into the two classes of *existing* and *non-existing*. Acts of non-veridical imagining are then seen as being distinguished from ordinary veridical acts of perception, memory, and so on, in the fact that, where the latter are directed towards existing objects, the former are directed towards objects which do not exist.

Meinong's fully developed object theory provides of course for entire realms of non-existent objects (or of objects 'beyond existence and non-existence'), capable of serving as the targets not merely of

3. On the notion of 'relational contact' see Smith 1984. It is frequently argued that the early Brentano, too, with his talk of '*intentionale Inexistenz*' (1925, pp. 124-32, trans. pp. 88-94), held a view according to which all intentionality is to be conceived along such immanentist lines. For arguments in favour of this interpretation see e.g. Farias 1968; for criticisms see Münch 1986.

4. It is not our business to repeat the arguments against the immanence theory provided e.g. by Husserl in LU V §11, by Ryle (1949, ch. VIII), and — with special reference to image-theories — by Sartre (1940); but consider the question as to the location of, say, the kangaroo which I imagine galloping through the Australian bush. Is this imagined kangaroo truly *in my mind*? And is it at the same time *in the bush*?

5. All presentations, Twardowski says, necessarily have objects, and all objects have properties. However some objects do not exist. See his 1894, §5.

acts such as those involved in reading works of fiction but also of all acts directed towards *possibilia* and *impossibilia* of various sorts. His theory has given rise to a number of insights, above all in work on the logic of fiction and on the semantic treatment of sentences involving non-referring (or non-straightforwardly-referring) singular terms, but — as the readers of this volume do not need reminding — it smacks also of a certain unrestrained profligacy in the construction of an ontology, so that it would be nice if we could preserve the solid core of Meinong's work without the need for non-existing objects.

From this point of view it is interesting that the theory of objects itself originated as part of a wider descriptive project in theoretical psychology. Meinong sought to devise a framework within which it would be possible to do justice to the characteristic features of mental acts and states of all conceivable varieties, without prejudice to those not directed towards what exists. Most important, from our present point of view, is that, when dealing with acts of non-veridical imagination and related acts, Meinong draws particular attention to the fact that such acts are normally distinguished from their veridical counterparts not merely in regard to the ontological status of their (putative) objects, but also in their form and nature *as acts*. This does not hold in all cases: the child's judgments about Santa Claus are not distinguished, in their form or nature as judgments, from his judgments about, say, Captain Cook; and Leverrier's judgments about the planet Vulcan are similarly not distinguished from his judgments about Saturn or Mars. It does, however, hold of those more interesting varieties of non-veridical acts which are involved in our aesthetic experience. For such acts are distinguished from veridical judgments, perceivings, etc., not only in the fact that they lack existing objects, but also in themselves.

§2. The Phantasy Modification

There is, in fact, a second dimension to the Meinongian theory of intentionality, in addition to that which concerns the existence or non-existence of the objects of mental acts, a dimension pertaining to the presence or absence of a moment of belief or conviction on the side of the acts themselves. How this second dimension is precisely to be understood is a matter of some debate. Different accounts are generated (a) according to whether one sees the moment of belief as

being itself a separate act, or as a state or disposition, and also (b) according to one's precise understanding of the nature of the 'suspension of belief' that is involved. The differences between these various accounts will not, however, be of relevance here.

Acts marked by a suspension of belief in the relevant (putative) object will henceforth be described as being subject to what we shall call the 'phantasy modification', the use of the term 'modification' being designed to reflect the fact that linguistic formulations of the effects of suspension can be correctly understood only if one pays careful attention to the peculiar modifying effects of the expressions involved. These effects have been described most succinctly by Twardowski, who draws a distinction between two different sorts of adjective:

An adjective is called attributive ... if it completes, enlarges — be it in a positive or in a negative direction — the meaning of the expression to which it is attached. An adjective is modifying if it completely changes the original meaning of the name to which it is attached. Thus in 'good man' the adjective 'good' is a truly attributive one; if one says 'dead man', one uses a modifying adjective, since a dead man is not a man.⁶

Modifying adjectives are divided further into the two classes of determining and abolishing. Determining adjectives have 'the function of a partial removal of the content expressed by a given noun', as for instance in 'forged banknote' or 'artificial limb'.⁷ Abolishing adjectives on the other hand remove all the characteristics which combine to yield a given idea,⁸ as in 'cancelled performance', 'declined handshake', 'frustrated entry', and so on. Our thesis concerning the phantasy modification can now be expressed in two parts as follows:

(1) modified *acts* relate to their unmodified counterparts as the objects of nouns modified by determining adjectives relate to the objects of the corresponding unmodified nouns — so that we are in fact dealing with mental acts of two radically different sorts;

(2) the (putative) *objects* of modified acts relate to the objects of

6. 1894, p. 13, Eng. trans. p. 11 (slightly altered). For further discussion of this passage see Mulligan 1986.

7. Twardowski 1979, p. 28.

8. *Op. cit.*, p. 29.

their veridical unmodified counterparts as the (putative) objects of nouns modified by abolishing adjectives relate to the objects of corresponding unmodified nouns.

Modified acts are thereby distinguished not by the fact that there are special objects to which they are directed, but by the fact that they *lack objects entirely*: a fictional object is not a special kind of object, any more than an averted war is a special kind of war. The structure of modified acts is not, like that of their normal, unmodified counterparts, in any sense relational. It is rather to be understood in terms of special internal qualities which the given acts possess. The fact that we find it convenient to avail ourselves of talk of 'fictional' or 'intentional' objects in order to describe such qualities has no ontological significance whatsoever, since this talk of objects is itself to be understood in a modified (abolishing) sense.

§3. Meinongian and Non-Meinongian Conceptions

Our attempt to exploit the notion of the phantasy modification as a means of understanding what is involved for example in our reading of works of fiction, will therefore involve our adopting a position in relation to the object pole of non-veridical acts which is contraposed to that of Meinong. The position we shall adopt is in fact much like that of the very early Husserl, especially in his 1894 review of Twardowski's book and in his paper "Intentionale Gegenstände" of the same year. Here Husserl insists, quite commonsensically and against his own later views, that to say that the god Jupiter is an intentional object of my act is not to say that there is something, namely Jupiter, who lacks existence but is thought about by me. It is rather simply to say that my act is structured, qualitatively, in a certain way — so that it is (a) describable as a presentation-of-the-god-Jupiter, and (b) such as to lack existence-presuppositions.⁹

Our position comes close also to so-called adverbial theories of

9. Thus the early Husserl also defended a type of modification theory, arguing that acts may or may not have the feature *existence positing*, though for Husserl this feature is not propositionally articulated (it is not a matter of judgment or belief), but is rather a presentation or nominal act (see LU V §34f.). Note that to be describable as a presentation-of-the-god-Jupiter an act may have to satisfy also certain external (historical) conditions having to do with its connection to the beliefs and habits of the people of Rome.

intentionality discussed in the more recent literature on the logic of fiction. According to such theories (or theory-sketches), the intentionality of an act is to be understood as signifying simply that an act is of a certain kind and is experienced in a certain manner.¹⁰ Adverbial theories have however been employed hitherto only in the semantic treatment of the properties of fictional language; the substantive psychological (or aesthetic) implications of the underlying approach have hardly been considered.

But can a position along these lines truly be brought into harmony with our entrenched ways of dealing with literary texts?¹¹ Or is it not rather the case that our intercourse with works of fiction, not only as readers but also as critics and as literary historians, has implications which dictate a properly ontological treatment of fictional objects and a properly relational treatment of fictional acts? It would seem, above all, to be a presupposition of much of our talk about fiction that we can *identify* fictional objects from one act or context to another. Thus we say, for example, that we have learned to understand David Copperfield on re-reading Dickens' novel; or that Faust is a character who is dealt with both by Marlowe and by Goethe; or that our conceptions of Ophelia have matured, over the ages, with the development of our understanding of the female psyche.

The most convenient interpretation of such forms of speech is of course that which appeals to special sorts of non-existent objects which can be compared and contrasted from one intentional context to the next. It was indeed the tendency to make such identifications which motivated the initial talk of 'intentional objects' on the part of Brentano's early followers. It can however be argued that the initial plausibility of the move to non-existent objects derives simply from the fact that ontologising interpretations are so readily and unproblematically available to us in almost all other areas of theoretical inquiry, that the move is made almost without thinking — and therefore without account having been taken of the counterintuitive ontological consequences which it may bring in its wake. These consequences can however be avoided if contrasts and comparisons

10. See e.g. Woods 1974, Rapaport 1979.

11. These are set out by Ingarden in his writings on the ontology and on the cognition of literature. See e.g. his 1931. Cf. also the survey by Howell, esp. pp. 151, 159ff.

of the given sort are re-interpreted in terms of similarities and differences in the relevant acts and in the sorts of relations in which these acts stand to the real props with which they are associated. Thus our identification of David Copperfield from one reading to the next can be accounted for by appealing to certain dependence relations between the acts involved in the two successive readings, relations which are structurally similar to dependence relations holding between ordinary unmodified acts involving reference to an identical object on two successive occasions. A similar account could be given of the 'identity' of Marlowe's and Goethe's Faust, as also of the development of our conceptions of Ophelia (which might be accounted for by pointing to changes in the qualitative features of the successive acts involved, changes constituting a development which would parallel the development of a more mature conception of some existent female). How all of this is possible may become clearer below. For the moment we must say something about the peculiarities of the modified acts which our readings of fiction involve.

§4. Phantasy Phenomena

A first implication of our remarks above is that, even when we cease to look at experiences such as those involved in reading fiction in terms of special, supernumerary objects, it will nonetheless be possible for us to benefit from the Meinongian contribution to descriptive psychology. Meinong saw, in fact, that it is necessary to divide mental phenomena into two subclasses which he calls, respectively, serious or genuine (*bona fide*) mental phenomena and phantasy phenomena, the latter being the result of applying the phantasy modification in the manner indicated crudely above.¹²

A phantasy presentation is distinguished from a *bona fide* presentation by the absence of conviction or belief in the existence of the (putative) presented object. A phantasy judgment is distinguished from a *bona fide* judgment by the absence of conviction or belief in the existence of the (putative) state of affairs which is judged.¹³ A

12. See Meinong's *On Assumptions*, esp. §§15ff., 53ff. and the summary in Krug, p. 241. Parallel ideas are put forward also by Pfänder in his 1913/16, pp. 46ff.

13. Meinong calls such phantasy judgments 'assumptions', a term I here wish to avoid because of its implication that there is in every case some entity (some objective or state of affairs) which gets assumed.

phantasy feeling is distinguished from a *bona fide* feeling by the fact that it has as its presupposition not a real judgment affirming the existence of the object of the feeling, but rather a phantasy judgment.

Of course this simple dichotomy can be maintained only for relatively simple acts. Thus already when we are dealing for example with future-directed acts we can see that quite special problems will arise, in virtue of the fact that even genuine cases of desire, expectation, hope, etc. may lack existing objects. It seems nonetheless to be the case that the two dimensions of having or lacking existing objects and of presence or absence of presuppositions of conviction or belief are relatively independent of each other. Thus we can have a genuine feeling, a feeling accompanied by a belief in the existence of a relevant object, where no such object in fact exists (the child's feelings about Santa Claus); and we can have phantasy feelings directed towards existing objects in which we do not believe (the phantasy feelings I direct towards the objects of an emotionally moving but apparently fictional letter, which I discover only later was in fact addressed to my neighbour's wife). Normally, however, genuine feelings are associated with genuine objects, phantasy feelings with phantasy objects (i.e. with no objects at all), and the departures from this norm will not concern us here.

The terminology of genuine and phantasy phenomena (derived from Meinong's talk of '*Ernstgefühle*' and '*Scheingefühle*') should not be taken to imply that the latter are in some sense unreal. Phantasy phenomena are not mere images or phantasms of real psychic phenomena. They are simply conscious processes lacking appropriate moments of conviction or belief. Hence they exist in no less real a sense than do their serious counterparts. They differ, rather, in other ways, which it will be our business in what follows to describe. The most important such difference is already clear: phantasy phenomena lack the genuine object-concern or object-directedness characteristic of unmodified phenomena. Thus a phantasy presentation is not a special *kind* of presentation, any more than an imitation horse is a special kind of horse. A phantasy presentation is not a presentation at all, and therefore it requires no special kind of object which it would be a presentation of. Similarly, a phantasy judgment is not a special kind of judgment, and therefore also it needs no special kind of object which it would be a judgment about.

§5. The Marks of Phantasy Phenomena

The first clue to the nature of the substitution theory of art consists in the suggestion that the play of phantasy material or of substitute psychic phenomena generated by a work of art can itself be genuinely enjoyable, can give rise to *bona fide* emotions of aesthetic pleasure. What we enjoy when we enjoy a work of art, one might now go on to claim, is precisely the play of phantasy phenomena that the work sets loose within us, so that the intentionality that is involved in our intercourse with works of art is in this respect a *self-directed intentionality*. (I am not wedded to this strong version of the theory, though I shall defend it in what follows as a means of testing out the ideas involved. A weaker version would assert simply the relevance of phantasy phenomena, and especially of phantasy emotions, to all not purely sensuous aesthetic enjoyment — and it seems clear that, even if this weaker version were to prove inadequate, we should learn at least something by establishing precisely which forms of aesthetic experience may dispense with a foundation in phantasy phenomena of the sort described.)

A view along these lines is not of course new. It is present in a number of aesthetic theories, from the Aristotelian theory of catharsis to the emotivism of I.A. Richards, though it differs, perhaps, from the majority of its predecessors in that it draws upon a theory of the phantasy modification and of the relations between emotional phenomena and mental phenomena of other sorts that is rooted in a detailed framework of descriptive psychology. Perhaps the most interesting anticipations are to be found in the views of the German romantics (though even here a lingering prejudice in favour of the objectual is still to be encountered). Objects, from the point of view of the romantic theory, are not that which is properly aimed at in our dealings with poetic works. Poetic objects are, rather, merely

detours and instruments which *enable the mind to reach back to itself*. And even if it should appear as if it were the will of the poet to create 'poems' — still we must recognise that these external 'poems' are only the instrument in the service of a higher goal, in that they generate for their part something out of themselves — 'poetry' [*Poesie*] — which has to be regarded as the proper sense of the poem. Poetry is not identical with the poem, nor with the objects which are created by the phantasy of the poet. The latter are merely the body, but not the soul of poetry, which is much rather that 'spirit' or 'breath' which lies above the poem and streams

forth from it, *setting going in our feelings those vibrations full of foreboding in which the true and proper effect and indeed almost the very essence of poetry consists...* If, therefore, it should be the first act of poetic phantasy to create objects, still the second act is to dispel their objectuality, so that they should be understood not as objects but only as counters and similes, that is, *not in their pure objectuality but according to their poetry*. (Korff 1940, p. 280, italics mine.)

The Meinongian theory of the phantasy modification was first applied within the realm of aesthetics by Meinong's Graz colleague Stephan Witasek, especially in his *Basic Principles of General Aesthetics* of 1904,¹⁴ and much of what Witasek has to say in that work will find a place within the theory here presented. Thus the job of the work of art, according to Witasek, is precisely 'to excite and to support the bringing about of phantasy material in the subject' (Witasek, p. 120). Both Meinong and Witasek, however, conceived the opposition between genuine and phantasy material as making sense only as part of a larger framework within which a crucial role is played also by the opposition between existing and non-existing objects, and we shall see that this implies an important limitation to their approach.

Consider, as a first, trivial example of the opposition between genuine and phantasy material at work, my contemplation of a drawing of a cat. I have, first of all, a real (visual) presentation of the drawing itself, together with genuine judgments such as: 'this is a drawing and not a cat', 'this drawing is intended to represent a cat', and perhaps also genuine feelings of sensuous pleasure in my perception of the drawing. In addition, however, I have also the phantasy presentation of a cat, together with phantasy judgments such as 'that is a cat'. I may conceivably also have phantasy emotions of various kinds built up on this phantasy material as basis, for example a phantasy feeling of sadness awakened by the sad expression of the (putative) cat. What I do *not* have is a genuine judgment or belief to the effect that there is a cat (or feline object of any sort) before me.

14. Summaries of Witasek's ideas are presented in my 1985 and 1987. The latter contains also indications as to the differences between Witasek's views and those of Meinong.

As this example shows, phantasy presentations and phantasy judgments share certain features with their normal unmodified counterparts, so that their linguistic expression typically employs identical grammatical forms. For this reason also the phantasy feelings which are built on phantasy presentations and phantasy judgments are in some (qualitative) respects similar to the corresponding real feelings, so that we are again accustomed to using identical expressions ('sadness', 'fear', 'pleasure') to refer to them both. Both physiologically and phenomenologically, the phantasy feeling shares certain features with its ordinary veridical counterpart (as a forged signature shares certain features with a real signature, yet is for all that — in virtue of its history — an entity of a different sort). This physiological similarity is illustrated most clearly, perhaps, in our capacity to cry in the cinema, but it is illustrated also in the capacity of the actor to be carried along by his phantasy feelings to such an extent that it is as if he has been taken over by the character he is playing.

The differences between the two sorts of phenomena are however immense. They manifest themselves first of all in the fact that, taken singly, phantasy feelings (and phantasy phenomena in general) are much simpler and more plastic than genuine psychic phenomena. Much of what is involved here was recognised already by Hume, who conceives the difference between the two sorts of phenomena as residing in the fact that vivacity is essential to serious phenomena, where 'the vigour of conception which fictions receive from poetry and eloquence, is a circumstance merely accidental'.¹⁵ This goes too far, however. For phantasy feelings, for example those we experience on imagining pleasant or nasty smells, differ entirely even from weak genuine feelings. The latter are only weakly delineated; they require psychic effort to be apprehended at all. Phantasy feelings on the other hand are clearly delineated, and are much more intimately associated with the circumstances in which they arise.¹⁶ Genuine feelings are differentiated further by the fact that they manifest a quite specific sort of temporal Gestalt. Thus for example they normally die away slowly, leaving lingering traces for what may be a considerable period

15. *Treatise*, Book I, Part III, Sect. X.

16. See Schwarz 1905/06, a dissertation on phantasy feelings written under Meinong which includes a detailed criticism of the Humean view.

even in the absence of their object.¹⁷ Phantasy feelings on the other hand are more like intellectual acts of wondering or deliberating, in that they can be interrupted at will and in such a way that they may then disappear immediately and without trace.

On the other hand however phantasy phenomena *do not go deep*. Our phantasy life is normally cut off almost entirely from the ordinary human world of actions and forebearances, in reflection of the very special and relational structures in which phantasy phenomena are embedded. As Hume expressed it, the fictional idea feels 'very different from the eternal established persuasions founded on memory and custom. They are somewhat of the same kind; but the one is much inferior to the other, both in its causes and effects.'¹⁸ This is seen most clearly in the case of phantasy desires, which involve no effort on the part of the desiring subject to bring about the realisation of the content of the desire in question.¹⁹

Phantasy feelings are distinguished from our genuine feelings to such an extent that they are, as Witasek puts it,

strictly speaking neither pleasure nor pain. Nobody would go into the theatre to watch a tragedy if the shock, care, sympathy and fear, and all the other, often intensive pain-feelings awakened by our participation in what is going on on the stage were real (Witasek, p. 115).

We are therefore at least to some extent capable of experiencing phantasy feelings in such a way as to emerge from the experience — virtually — unscathed, a fact which can be called in aid as a means of explaining why we are so ready to allow ourselves to be influenced in our emotional lives by works of art.

Perhaps the most important mark of phantasy phenomena, however, is that they are *subject to our will* to a much greater extent than is the case with genuine psychic material. The latter must rest in every case on some belief, on a belief in the existence of the relevant object; and the acquisition of belief is not something that lies within the

17. Cf. Kenny, pp. 58f.

18. *Treatise*, *loc.cit.*

19. Phantasy desires are not, of course, found only in the context of aesthetic experiences. They are present whenever we are leafing idly through a magazine full of advertisements, or whenever alternative plans or projects are being contemplated in abstraction from serious intent. Thus clearly they can become transformed, under suitable conditions, into real desires.

control of the subject in question. It presupposes, in normal cases, that the subject invests effort in engaging himself with given objects, and where this is not possible then the acquisition of belief may depend (as unbelievers know) on something like the grace of God. Phantasy phenomena, on the other hand, dispense entirely with a foundation of belief of the given sort, so that completely arbitrary phantasies can be generated at will and without further ado.

The scope of phantasy phenomena which we are capable of experiencing is therefore vastly greater than that of genuine phenomena. In the production of organised combinations and sequences of phantasy phenomena, however, a complex fabric of constraints — laws of development and of compatibility — has to be observed, so that the individual may find it no less difficult to call forth in phantasy the combinations he desires than to create circumstances where corresponding genuine phenomena become available. The powers of the will in giving rise to complex combinations of phantasy phenomena can however be extended by the use of special artifacts — works of art — which, to the extent that they have been produced in accordance with the laws in question, may serve as catalysts in the production of complexes of the given sort. Our desire to be influenced by works of art can now be explained by appeal to the fact that the complexes of phantasy phenomena which they may help to elicit are able to substitute, to stand proxy for, the corresponding genuine psychic phenomena, so that we can enjoy experiences qualitatively similar to genuine experiences even where the pre-suppositions of the latter are not available (a fact which has consequences also for our understanding of the role of art in shaping and developing our emotional experience and in the education of our sensibility).

§6. Aesthetic Pleasure and Sensuous Pleasure

It seems, now, that we enjoy a work of art precisely to the extent that it gives rise to phantasy phenomena within us — so that we may conceive aesthetic pleasure as being itself essentially a matter of *pleasure in phantasy* of the relevant sort. One advantage of this conception is that it provides us with a justification for the customary distinction between genuinely aesthetic pleasure and other sorts of genuinely pleasurable feeling bound up with works of art (the

pleasure in possession or in accumulation, for example, or the pleasure in solving aesthetic puzzles, or in the functioning of the senses). In these latter cases it is precisely the play of phantasy emotions which a work of art is capable of generating that is being ignored, in favour of other emotions of a non-modified sort. By distinguishing between genuine aesthetic enjoyment on the one hand and the play of phantasy phenomena which provides the foundation for such enjoyment on the other, the theory is also able to explain how it is possible that we should experience the most intensive feelings of pleasure as a result of allowing ourselves to be exposed to the sadness, gloom or anguish elicited by a tragic work of art.

In addition, however, the theory throws light on the relation between genuine aesthetic pleasure and the sensuous pleasure we take in purely ornamental art. Certainly there is a sense in which, when we experience a work of art, we enjoy also the pattern of sounds or shapes or textures created by the artist. It is indeed our sensory awareness of such patterns which in many cases serves as foundation for that play of phantasy phenomena which is here conceived as the primary object of aesthetic enjoyment. Moreover, sensuous pleasure satisfies also an important theoretical requirement of our present approach: it is in every case a matter of acts directed in a perfectly straightforward way toward real material things, processes and events. Yet pleasure of this sort is of course something we can experience also, for example, in relation to objects of nature, and it can therefore not serve as the key to determining what is peculiar to aesthetic experience as such. There are moreover certain peculiarities of sensuous pleasure which seem alien to properly aesthetic enjoyment. Thus sensuous pleasure is directly sensitive to the intensity of the sensory experiences which produce it. The feeling of sensuous pleasure thereby disappears, or is at least reduced to an almost unnoticeable intensity, in the passage from sensation to memory, while the very same phantasy material can be generated by (for example) a melody, whether the latter is heard, remembered or even — to some extent — imagined. Aesthetic pleasure and sensuous pleasure seem, thereby, to belong to different levels of experience, or of *distance* from their respective objects — and in this connection it is necessary to point out that in the case of literature it is not the *work* itself that is sensibly experienced but only *copies*, and it seems clear

that a printed text is normally not capable of serving as the object of aesthetically relevant experiences of a sensuous sort.

§7. Illusion and Error

We have argued that the acts involved in reading works of fiction are not to be understood as involving a directedness to special kinds of objects. They arise, rather, when the reader allows himself to be guided by the text in having determinately qualified acts of a certain sort, which manifest certain internal similarities to his everyday acts but are marked precisely by the suspension of the object-directedness that is characteristic of the latter. This view, which explains why we are in a certain sense not affected by the ill fortunes of the putative objects described in works of fiction, has the consequence that our experience of literature in general, as of poetry in particular, becomes allied to our experience of music. In both cases we have a passive taking in and a being affected by the work, rather than an intentional directedness to and intellectual concern with objects (so that our enjoyment of those passages of a novel which are a matter of sheer word-play, or of quasi-philosophical reflection, or of the description of impersonal social phenomena such as processions or battles or entire historical epochs, is no different in principle from our enjoyment of those passages — too often selected for exclusive treatment by philosophers interested in the logic of fiction — in which named characters are described). Certainly our acts of reading are tied together by complex relations of a sort which are found also in our everyday experiences; but the objectuality which such relations would normally engender is here dispelled.

This implies that the normal and properly aesthetic approach to works of fiction is quite different from the objectualising approach which might be adopted by, say, a literary historian who is interested in using a given work as a representation of objects because he conceives it as a means of gaining insight into a given historical period or literary personality.²⁰ And we can, on this basis, begin to

20. Problem-cases for adverbial theories of fictional intentionality seem to arise predominantly in relation to assertions about fictional characters originating in these latter spheres, and for all the difficulties which such theories have to face, it has yet to be conclusively established that they cannot be used to provide an account of the semantic structures involved in

see how to face the objection frequently advanced by proponents of an ontological view to the effect that a reading of a work of fiction is possible only to the extent that the reader allows himself to be tricked by the work into believing in the objects represented by it. Otherwise, or so it is argued, there would be no objects toward which the relevant phantasy feelings could be directed, and so no phantasy feelings could arise at all. If, however, phantasy feelings share merely certain internal characteristics with their *bona fide* counterparts, then they can quite well come about in non-intentional contexts — as the case of phantasy feelings generated by works of music will show. Further, to suppose that the reader *believes* in the putative objects of his acts, that his intercourse with works of fiction rests upon a certain kind of blanket self-delusion, is surely far-fetched. For the cancellation of the moment of conviction is here entirely conscious and deliberate. On the view defended in the present paper, in contrast, it is possible to admit that the given acts do not as such involve any error (though — and this is an important point — our more or less theoretical beliefs about them might). And though we do occasionally experience works involving one or other sort of trickery or deception on the part of the artist, even trickery of a sort that contributes essentially to our aesthetic appreciation of a given work

our normal experiences of reading fiction. The principal difficulty with adverbial theories — that they render unintelligible certain acceptable sorts of quantification into intentional contexts — does not of course arise where such quantification is not allowed as acceptable, e.g. because we do not allow the inference from 'John is thinking-about-Sherlock' and 'Mary is thinking-about-Sherlock' to 'There is something which John is thinking about and Mary is thinking about'. A particular interesting problem case here is provided by assertions like: 'The Alexander dealt with in the *Alexanderroman* is the same as the Alexander who conquered Persia', where the acceptability of quantification seems unavoidable in virtue of the fact that we are here dealing with an existing object. As Ingarden has shown, however (see his 1931, §34), there are strong reasons for supposing that the given existing object is irrelevant to the aesthetic experience of the work in question. An assertion of the given form might in fact be understood as meaning something like: 'in virtue of certain facts concerning the origin of such and such a novel, its readers occasionally find themselves being deflected from their properly aesthetic concern with the work to a concern with a certain real object'.

of art, the peculiarity of the experiences involved is then no different from that which is to be encountered in our experiences of illusions relating to more homespun objects of perception.

It might be argued that someone may, for example while reading, become momentarily so absorbed that he forgets that he is caught up in phantasy. The moment of belief-suspension then falls away from his acts in such a way that his reading will approximate to the making of common-or-garden-variety mistakes. As Ryle puts it:

Make-believe is compatible with all degrees of scepticism and credulity... The fact that people can fancy that they see things, are pursued by bears, or have a grumbling appendix, without realising that this is nothing but fancy, is simply a part of the unsurprising general fact that not all people are, all the time, at all ages and in all conditions, as judicious or critical as could be wished (1949, p. 258f).

Such phenomena are however at most an ephemeral matter, a product of special circumstances; they are not something which penetrates to the essence of aesthetic experience as such.

§8. Musical Substitutions

The most important advantage of the substitution theory lies in the fact that it can be extended naturally beyond the narrative and representational arts, that is to say beyond those cases where our aesthetic experiences rest on emotional elements recognisably derived from our familiar, home-grown feelings and emotions, to encompass our aesthetic pleasure in music, or in the various forms of abstract art. For our appreciation of these arts, too, seems to involve the generation of phantasy emotions in a way that is analogous to the representational case.

It is possible to distinguish phantasy feelings of different degrees of abstraction from our ordinary object-related feelings. The phantasy feelings generated by, say, romantic novels might be held to be relatively closely related to our genuine feelings (modulo the structural differences between genuine and phantasy feelings set out above). Suppose, however, that the capacity to enjoy such phantasy feelings has once been engendered; the artist is then at liberty to extend this capacity, to experiment with language in various ways in order to find means of eliciting phantasy feelings which are one degree removed from the phenomena of our genuine feeling life. This

cycle can then be repeated, giving rise in cumulation to forms of literature — and to phantasy phenomena — of an ever more subtle or abstract character.

The phantasy feelings that are evoked by absolute music, now, have been similarly removed from our normal object-related experiences via a process of cumulative abstraction that has run in parallel (we might suppose) with the evolution of musical forms. But here abstraction has been taken so far that the phantasy experiences generated are such as to dispense with all presuppositions of the sort found in corresponding genuine or serious feelings. Thus the latter are coloured by the fact that they are in every case restricted to a relatively narrow range of appropriate objects.²¹ The phantasy feelings elicited by a work of absolute music, in contrast, dispense with all objectual restrictions of this sort. Whoever is genuinely sad knows what he is sad about, and it is the thought of this which is the presupposition of his feeling of sadness. But when a piece of music expresses or gives rise to sadness — and we have taken it for granted that many pieces of music are objectively so structured that they elicit feelings of this (general) sort — then such awareness is absent. The sadness is as it were cut free from its normal associations. Even if, in our experience of music, we allow ourselves to sink into the feeling of sadness, then we do not become conscious of some sad painful event — or if we do, then this is incidental, for it is the phantasy feeling itself, precisely as it is awakened by the music, that belongs to the aesthetic experience of the work, not any memories or other associations which might accompany our listening.

Such experiences, which are removed as far as possible from the genuine object-bound emotions present in our normal feeling life, might be called 'pure' phantasy feelings. It may be that it is experiences of this sort which Schopenhauer has in mind when he writes of absolute music that it

never expresses the phenomenon, but only the inner nature, the in-itself of every phenomenon, the will itself. Therefore music does not express

21. Thus the feeling of disgust, for example, is restricted to objects such as gangrenous wounds, vermin, corpses, regurgitated food. See Kolnai's treatment of the phenomenology of disgust in his 1929. Compare also, from a somewhat different point of view, Kenny's *Action, Emotion and Will*, pp. 192f., where it is pointed out that it is impossible to feel remorse for something in which one believes one had no part.

this or that particular and definite pleasure, this or that affliction or pain or sorrow or horror or gaiety or merriment or peace of mind, but joy, pain, sorrow, horror, gaiety, peace of mind *themselves*, as it were *in abstracto*, that which is essential to them, without any accessories, and so also without the motives for them. Nevertheless, we understand them perfectly in this extracted quintessence.²²

Schopenhauer is of course here going too far. The psychic phenomena elicited in our experiences of music will typically elude fixation in language, so that 'joy', 'pain', and so on, will cover only one small segment of the total repertoire of feelings here capable of being experienced. Moreover, the phenomena as experienced distinguish themselves from the phenomena of our normal feeling life in that they manifest a peculiar dynamic character. Music serves not merely to crystallise abstract phantasy feelings within us; the feelings in question enjoy a peculiar incompleteness, being able to exist only within the context of dynamic complexes of a quite special sort — complexes which in turn can exist only in association with the relevant complex aural experiences. There then obtains a sort of functional relationship, a not consciously mediated and never more than partially realised correlation between the sound-patterns on the one side and the chain of phantasy feelings they give rise to on the other, so that the latter is characterised as possessing its own articulate rhythm and tone-colouring, phenomena of a sort which are entirely lacking in our genuine emotional experience.²³

We are now in a position where we can see the precise sense in which the Meinong-Witasek object-theory of aesthetic experience is limited as compared with the theory of special act qualities defended

22. *The World as Will and Representation*, Dover ed., vol. I, p. 261, trans. amended slightly. Korff (*op.cit.*, p. 281) makes a similar point on behalf of the German romantics, and the idea is illuminatingly pursued also in Levinson 1982..

23. Related functional relationships are seen in the way in which memories of past experiences may be reawakened by a certain smell or taste or trick of intonation. On the role of physical resonance in general, both within and without the life of feeling, see Witasek, e.g. p. 137; Mulligan and Smith 1986; Smith 1987. Cf. also the discussion of 'dynamical joys' in Duncker 1941, p. 403f.

here. For it seems that the object-theory cannot cope with subtle emotional experiences of the sort that are awakened by music and by other abstract arts, experiences which are freed, in their inner structure, from the constraints imposed by the forms of objects.²⁴ Meinong's theory, because it underestimates the structural consequences of our acts' having been cut free from object-relatedness, can now be seen to have drawn our phantasy experiences too close to normal veridical perceptions and to object-related acts of other sorts. Our position implies, in contrast, that only certain restricted varieties of aesthetic perception — for example our perception of works of representational sculpture and painting — can be directly aligned with veridical perceptions. For only here are our experiences governed by the presence of appropriate objectual props. Our experiences of music, poetry, and prose fiction, in contrast, forms of art where material props do not serve as primary objects, are structured in a wholly different way.

§9. Concluding Remarks

One might express the substitution theory in its crudest form as follows. We seek out works of art because we enjoy the physiology and the phenomenology of, for example, the experience of love or mountain climbing. In the momentary absence of an object which might serve as prop for the promotion of *genuine* feelings in this regard, we turn instead to the nearest convenient substitute. The experiences we then enjoy, precisely because there are no objects to which they are attached, have a less solid, more flimsy and ethereal character than their ordinary counterparts. It could indeed be argued that art arose — or came to be separated out from other, related phenomena²⁵ — precisely through the discovery that the experience of substitute emotions can in fact be pleasurable. Artistic forms could

24. Of course a piece of music, too, is an object, and Meinong's theory can to this extent deal — purely formally — with our experiences thereof. But the theory is not able to penetrate further, in such a way that it could provide an account of the peculiarly fragmented character of the emotional phenomena which such experiences may involve.

25. Here religion, history and folk legend spring immediately to mind, though it may be that the practice of cave-painting, too, involved the generation of substitute emotions of the sort here described.

then be seen as having developed as methods were found to re-produce substitute emotions in ever more subtle and sophisticated ways. The substitution theory could then be used to throw light on the nature of artistic traditions, i.e. on the ways in which we allow our phantasy lives to be subject not merely to our own will, but also to the will of others (artists), who have in turn allowed their own phantasy lives to be affected in different ways by the actions of their predecessors. For clearly there occurs a sort of cumulation of our phantasy lives, both individually and through successive generations: we have to *learn*, for example, to enjoy tragic emotions,²⁶ and it seems that subtle phantasy emotions in general can exist only as elements in a chain of abstractions of the sort described above, to the extent that they may be capable of being appreciated only by those who have absorbed the patterns of experience appropriate to the relevant earlier stages.

The substitution theory can throw light also, however, on the nature of aesthetic value. It implies that the value of a work of art is something like a function of the subtlety of the phantasy emotions to which it gives rise,²⁷ and it seems that such a view is at least broadly in conformity with our pretheoretical intuitions as to the relative value and disvalue of different works. Thus we tend to set a low value on those forms of music or literature which appeal directly to non-subtle emotions (to emotions at only one remove from the genuine emotions of our ordinary experience). On the other hand we tend to place a low aesthetic value also on those forms of art — highly mathematical music, for example — which can give rise to no phantasy emotions because they do not meet requisite physiological and phenom-

26. The underlying physiology is a learned physiology: see Grassl and Smith 1986 and the references there given.

27. Other accounts are possible: one might, for example, conceive value in terms of the power or capacity of a work — or of its associated material props — to yield phantasy emotions at all. Compare also the views put forward by Kant in his third *Critique* and by Schiller in his *Aesthetic Education*, to the effect that the beautiful precisely is that which brings about a harmony in our emotions. From the opposite perspective, however, one might formulate a Platonic view according to which the degree to which a work of art gives rise to phantasy emotions would be a measure of the *disvalue* of the work.

enological preconditions (we talk instead, for example, of the mathematical or structural elegance of the music, or of similar values). And even should it prove that considerations such as this cannot be generalised in such a way as to provide a complete account of aesthetic value for all artistic forms, it seems nonetheless that there could be no way of coming to a serious understanding of aesthetic value which would not involve some reference, however indirect, to distinctions such as those here treated.

One final (philosophical) advantage of the substitution theory, and of the account of aesthetic value it dictates, is that both refer exclusively to what exists, in the perfectly straightforward sense in which real spatio-temporal things, processes and events exist. For where fictional *relata* and other *abstracta* are, *ex hypothesi*, not real, so that it is difficult to see how they could mesh ontologically with the real entities which constitute our aesthetic experiences, everything referred to in the present theory, the mental episodes and enduring states of presentation, emotion, and belief, the marks or physical props of aesthetic experience hanging on the wall or on the shelf or echoing through the concert hall, the causal powers of these marks or props to give rise to mental phenomena of the given sort, the subjects who have dealings with these props and who enjoy the given mental phenomena, all of these entities are real, and all are structured internally and related to each other by complex but straightforwardly intelligible relations of various sort.

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