USE OF THESES

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THE CRITICISM OF SCULPTURE

by

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Australian National University

frontispiece (facing): Moschophoros, c.575-550 B.C. A paradigm case of sculpture.
Although it owes a number of intellectual debts, this entire thesis is, in the sense implicit in the published requirements of the University, my own original work.

Donna Brock.
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The sources of these illustrations are as follows:

Moschophoros: As in Martin Hurlimann et al., Masterpieces of European Sculpture, pl.2.

Unique Forms of Continuity in Space: as in Andrew Carnduff Ritchie, Sculpture of the Twentieth Century p.135

All the remainder are taken from Carola Geidion-Welcker, Contemporary Sculpture, at the following pages:

Bird in Space, p.141; The Bull, p.93; Ready Made, p.90;
Steel Fish, p.205.
ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used in citations:

AJP        Australasian Journal of Philosophy
BJA        British Journal of Aesthetics
JAAC       Journal of Aesthetics of Art Criticism
PAS        Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society
PASS       do., Supplementary Volume
PR         Philosophical Review
RIP         Revue Internationale de Philosophie
PREFACE

The defects of works of scholarship or of intellect, like those of works of art (which, after all, they generally are) are never entirely to be excused; although there is always something relevant and occasionally something useful to be said in explanation of them.

In his Discourse of 1786 Sir Joshua Reynolds voiced a doubt which has gnawed at the artist's heart ever since; especially if he is so much a victim of cultural history as to be expected to show both the classical character of the practical chap and something of the romantic nature of the divine fool as well. '...yet perhaps the most perfect criticism', Reynolds said, 'requires habits of speculation and abstraction, not very consistent with the employment which ought to occupy, and the habits of mind which ought to prevail in a practical Artist'.

Thus, being a professional sculptor, I write abstractly and speculatively under a double disadvantage: not only without formal training in philosophy, but also and always with the superstitious fear at my elbow that if what I have to say is sound then I am by that very fact exposed as an artistic fraud; and if indeed a 'practical Artist' then, necessarily, a foolish venturer on intellectual seas.

Under the circumstances it seems to me to have been a bold and generous act of the Australian National University to offer me the
many advantages of a Research Scholarship in order to make a study of those aesthetic problems which generally lie more or less dangerously unresolved at the back of a reflective sculptor's mind.

There are two principal linked problems. The first is quite general, and is readily posed by asking what sort of activity the activity of aesthetic appraisal is: whether it is at all like scientific investigation in being directed to the elucidation of uncommonly subtle matters of fact; whether it is, like judicial inquiry, devoted to the establishment of probabilities beyond reasonable doubt; whether it is like the grading of produce for market, or like the election of heroes by augury or divination. Or whether, perhaps, it is to some extent like only itself, with a character not to be fully described with the obliquity of analogy but only directly, as wanted persons are described in police messages.

It is because the artist is a critic himself that this question is important to him; for each time he chooses to make a work or a part of it thus rather than otherwise, he performs a covert act of aesthetic appraisal - and if he has inept or cramping theories of the nature of such an act he may feel constrained to do what he need not do, or to refrain from doing what it is fully open to him to do.

The first five chapters of this thesis are devoted more or less directly to the question of just what it is that critics are doing when they say the things and when they make the gestures that they say and make; and if my account is correct or even nearly so, then
artists should find the burden of theory a great deal less onerous than it has seemed to the authors and the partisans of the uncountable aesthetic manifestos of modern times. This section of the work is for the most part unoriginal in its leading ideas, although it contains one or two suggestions which I have not seen or heard expressed elsewhere. It does, however, assemble material around a sustained theme in such a way as to expose me to the legitimate rewards of responsibility - praise or blame.

Into the wider context of the account of aesthetic appraisal thus provided I have tried to set a solution to a specifically sculptural problem which, although it is the locus of a good deal of modern rhetoric, does not seem anywhere to have been adequately argued. This is the question whether what are sometimes called 'pictorial' considerations are or are not relevant to the critical appraisal of sculpture. I believe that the difficulty has deeper roots than is generally thought, and that they go well down into the philosophical substratum of theories of human perception. In attempting to trace them out I have been obliged to delve into matters which do not seem on the face of it to be aesthetic at all. For this reason there occurs, between Chapters V and VI, a perceptible break in the philosophical texture of the thesis, from fairly general argument applicable to a wide range of indubitably aesthetic subject matter to a much closer style of argument concerning the altogether non-aesthetic
matching by eye of the visible features of things: in particular, the hue of coloured surfaces.

This move is vindicated, if at all, by its efficacy. If I have got hold of the right end of the stick two consequences follow from the discussion of matching. One of them is a small but possibly useful contribution to epistemology: the introduction of the notion of the imaginary picture plane between the perceiver and the perceived, in terms of the presently acceptable image upon which it is often our unreflecting habit to give accounts of the things that we see. And the second, presently more important consequence is that the key to the dispute about the proper criticism of sculpture which has rumbled on so inconclusively for so long is revealed as lying all the time in our own hands - or rather, in our own language. All that was needful to unlock the puzzle was recognition that if what we see is three-dimensional, then we see something that is three-dimensional and not any two-dimensional image of that thing. Confusion has been bred by our habit of giving accounts of the three-dimensional things that we see in an imprecise mixture of three-dimensional and of two-dimensional terms. We ordinarily and naturally give what I shall call 'picture accounts' as well as 'object accounts' - and one or two other kinds of account - of what we see.

The polemicists of modern sculptural theory have been misled in part by the very widespread mistake that the real objects of visual perception must all, always, be some sort of two-dimensional 'image' or
'impression'; and in part they have been seduced by the non sequitur that whatever has intimately to do with flat planes cannot also have intimately to do with solid bodies. The language of visual perception, in which we express our perceptually acquired beliefs about the world, is just such an ambivalent medium; and it is in this language that we make our aesthetic remarks and defend our verdicts upon works of sculpture.

Whether in the end I am right or wrong, or something of both about all this, I certainly owe thanks for encouragement and help not only to the A.N.U. but also to a number of individuals; especially to Mr Stanley Eveling who first mocked me into thinking what I was saying about sculpture, and to my research supervisors: to Professor John Passmore for obliging me (always with immense patience and kindness) to argue every inch of my laborious way; to Mr Bruce Benjamin who, I hope, would not have been too disappointed with the outcome; and to Professor Peter Herbst, who endured my lectures to his undergraduate students on some of the themes of this thesis with an encouraging show of fortitude.

D.B.

Canberra, January 1965
SYNOPSIS

CHAPTERS I and II

These chapters deal with some of the problems involved in the definition of sculpture, and with the so-called 'essence' and the ontological status of aesthetic objects in general and of sculptures in particular. Had there been a little less ground to cover it would have been convenient to place all this introductory material in a single chapter: as it is, the unwieldiness is somewhat reduced by dividing the matter roughly between the questions (Chapter I) 'How should we use the word "sculpture"?' and (Chapter II) 'Are sculptures objects of such a nature that some kinds of criticism are necessarily and evidently inept or misdirected since they either do not presuppose that nature or do presuppose some other nature?'

It is argued that sculptures form a Wittgensteinian 'family'; that the concept of sculpture is open to the future, and that the question what is the ontological status of a work of sculpture is a bogus one. In particular, the essentialist ontology of an Idealist such as Collingwood is rejected; and it is maintained that it is not replaceable by any simple Materialist ontology since the word 'sculpture' is properly used of - at least - the following kinds of thing: material objects; types of which material objects may be regarded as tokens; objects not only simpliciter but as seen in relation to a cultural and historical context; and of the movements of material objects and of -xi-
their temporal changes, as in the cases of the mobile and of 'auto-
destructive' art.

There is much here that is too philosophically fundamental to
argue ab initio, and must be taken rather as a declaration of the
general standpoint adopted than as a systematic defence of
presuppositions which, whether entirely valid or not, are nowadays
both familiar and respectable.

CHAPTER III

Turning from aesthetic objects to their appraisal, it is
suggested that there is a kind of remark - an aesthetic remark - which
exercises the aesthetic sensibility of a critic who has adopted an
aesthetic attitude to an appropriate object. These ideas are
evidently connected, but may be elucidated piecemeal: the aesthetic
remark is not foundational to later argument, but is merely the first
to receive attention.

It is held that although there are conspicuous aesthetic terms
(graceful, elegant, etc.) which are almost invariably used to make
aesthetic remarks, this is not a necessary state of affairs.
Aesthetic remarks may be made without employing any explicitly
aesthetic terms, and it is at any rate not logically impossible to use
'aesthetic' terms for other than aesthetic purposes.

Aesthetic remarks, it is maintained, are such that necessary and
sufficient conditions for their correct application cannot be
specified. It is incidentally pointed out that Frank Sibley, the
author of one of the most illuminating recent papers on this topic,
errs in making this claim for **aesthetic terms** instead of for aesthetic
remarks.

The use of such aesthetic terms as 'pretty' and 'gaudy' is
ordinarily taught through ostended paradigms; for which reason, in a
culturally homogeneous society, it often seems that there is a well
established **correct** use in spite of the freedom from the regimen of
necessary and sufficient conditions. For this reason, it is argued, a
study of explicitly aesthetic terms does not greatly help us to grasp
what is peculiarly **aesthetic** about aesthetic remarks; since they share
their application-condition freedom with certain other kinds of term,
and moreover their firm anchorage in paradigms during the learning
process makes for relatively easy agreement about their use. What is
peculiarly aesthetic about aesthetic remarks, it is suggested, is
their function of drawing attention to some aspect or feature of an
object of sense-perception to which only an aesthetically sensitive
person would, in the context, respond. This may well be a commonplace
**natural** feature of the object, the mere discrimination of which calls
for no special sensitivity, although the choice of **this** feature for
remark rather than another is, under the circumstances, a demonstration
of aesthetic sensibility.
CHAPTER IV

An attempt is made to survey the much disputed boundaries between the domain of the aesthetic, the moral, the economic, etc. Traditional attempts to find a sharp criterion of demarcation are criticized, particularly those which rely upon a special quasi-physiological mode of 'aesthetic' perception. This notion is related to the core concept of 'aesthetic disinterestedness' deriving from Kant, and to the logically independent idea of the 'innocent eye' by means of which Ruskin introduced a Berkeleyan strand to twine with the Kantian into the thread of recent aesthetic theory in which an introspectively discerned aesthetic response is postulated. Clive Bell's theory of the 'aesthetic emotion' is taken as typical, and is subjected to an assault which makes use of arguments derived from Wittgenstein's rejection of private languages.

It is suggested that there is, in the nature of things, no simple or conclusive way of distinguishing aesthetic remarks from others, but that marginal cases must be argued on their merits. In defence of this view a paradigmatic situation is set up, in which a professional art critic makes an exemplary aesthetic remark about a universally acknowledged work of sculpture in an appropriate place and upon a suitable occasion. The main elements of this total situation are then severally varied in such a way as to become unparadigmatic or even contra-paradigmatic, while the remaining bulk of the considerations remain unchanged. The question whether, in each case, the words
uttered constitute an aesthetic remark in the new situation is then seen to be arguable in different ways according to the set of the circumstances, and to resist general solution a priori. It is a corollary of the indeterminate character of aesthetic concepts that they are to some extent historically mutable.

CHAPTER V

The traditional view of so-called 'judgments of aesthetic value', it is claimed, is that they attribute a single homogeneous property or character - aesthetic excellence - to suitable objects. This view is challenged, it being argued that the notion of aesthetic excellence is not - to use a mathematical analogy - linear but multi-dimensional: that whatever may be attributed to an object which is judged to be 'consummate' is not simply and literally somewhat more or less of what is attributed to it when it is said to be 'marvellous' or 'negligible' or 'superb'.

Hare's view that '...it is the purpose of the word "good" and other value words to be used for teaching standards' is challenged in as much as he maintains (but, I think, need not maintain) that it would be inconsistent '...to apply the word "good" to one picture, if I refuse to apply it to another picture which I agree to be in all other respects exactly similar...'. The honorific imputation of aesthetic originality, at least, it is argued, shows Hare's doctrine to be inadequate.

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Verdicts, it is claimed, are a peculiar variety of aesthetic remark which is marked off imprecisely from the general run by the appropriateness of giving reasons in terms of other aesthetic remarks as well as in terms of the natural features of the object. They are also essentially partisan, and the notions of the pro and the con attitude as expressed in verdicts is examined, together in each case with the triple possibility that a verdict might be genetic, open or consequential. Examples are offered and discussed.

The purposes of verdicts - as contrasted with the reasons given in support of them - are held to be (at least) threefold. They are discussed under the rubrics of the performative theory, the emotive theory and the predictive theory; and these are held not to be competitive but rather collaborative accounts of the practice of sensitive critics. Performative verdicts receive special remark since they do not depend upon the giving of reasons but upon the authority of the critic - although reasons will often be found for them. It is a consequence of the performative element in criticism that new and seemingly arbitrary material is introduced into cultural history at its growing point.

CHAPTER VI

The need for an adequate philosophical theory of perception with which to attack the longstanding problem of the difference (if any) between the principles of criticism in painting and in sculpture, is stressed.
Since an account of visual perception which admits no intermediate entities such as 'sensa' or 'sense-data' between the perceiver and the object perceived is to be recommended, one such theory is taken as a starting point. D.M. Armstrong's identification of 'veridical perception' with the acquiring of up-to-the-moment true belief about the world, as proposed in his book Perception and the Physical World, is criticized in relation to a single specific problem: that of the acquisition of true beliefs about the colours of things in the world.

It is argued that there are three and only three logically distinct ways of selecting a sample to match a seen colour: direct matching (as with cottons or silks), which should strictly be regarded as measuring; matching at a distance (which cannot in general be done with very great accuracy, and which at best demonstrates the acquisition, on sight, of an approximately true belief); and illusionistic picture-matching, which can be carried out to any required degree of accuracy by a normally sighted person and which, moreover, makes sense of the accounts we give, and criticize, of the colour of such nebulous objects as the sky, shadows, smoke, and so on.

CHAPTER VII

The leading ideas of the previous chapter are developed, and especially the notion that to see rightly is not necessarily to enjoy the 'veridical perception' of a viewer who is able to give correct object accounts of what he sees but is equally and indeed rather to be
able to give, on sight (and from a given position) acceptable facsimile, model or picture accounts of what is seen. The notion of the acceptability (of picture accounts in particular) is examined in the light of Gombrich's theory of the development of naturalistic painting.

The thesis is developed that we ordinarily, and moreover quite properly, give picture, model and facsimile accounts as well as object accounts of what we see, and that there are appropriate criteria for the truth or accuracy of an account of any of these types. Since they are accounts of the object that is seen, there is no evident reason why any or all of such accounts should not appear at some point in the critical appraisal of a visible object.

CHAPTER VIII

The application of these considerations to the particular problem of sculpture is exhibited through a discussion, first, of a pair of competing theories - both of which are seen to be in some ways false and at best only capable of dealing partially with the facts.

These theories may, for convenience in reference, be spoken of as 'Hildebrand's theory' of the essentially pictorial character of sculpture, and 'Read's theory' of the essentially spatial character of sculpture. The disputants are seen to share a common error involving the postulated two-dimensionality of the objects of visual perception, which is rectified by the adoption of a theory of direct perception.
If, in addition, the conceptual apparatus of picture, model and facsimile accounts is adopted, it becomes evident that the stipulation of any one type of account in terms of which aesthetic appraisal is to be conducted is perfectly arbitrary. The disputants are not really *arguing*, as they suppose themselves to be, but merely legislating and counter-legislating.

Finally, the two aspects of the whole inquiry, the general and the specific, are brought together in the analysis of a paradigmatic passage of aesthetic appraisal of sculpture to which all the central ideas of the thesis are seen to have clear application.
CHAPTER 1

THE PLACE OF SCULPTURE IN AESTHETIC THEORY

There is no doubt at all that aesthetics is a confused and confusing topic. In what other traditional branch of philosophy would it be so tempting to write: 'This essay - let there be no doubt about that - is philosophy as well as aesthetics.'?\(^1\) To call it a discipline is to exaggerate its rigour; perhaps 'field' is the most subtly and suitably evocative metaphor.\(^2\) It is a field in which, with a few notable exceptions, considerable philosophers have been reluctant to labour very systematically, and some of its ranker growths have provoked not only professional jibes but even the wry incredulity of laymen. As Randall Jarell's narrator in *Pictures from an Institution* puts it:

> Miss Rasmussen began to tell Gottfried and me about her statues. Some of what she said was technical, and you would have to be a welder to appreciate it; the rest was aesthetic or generally philosophic, and to appreciate it you would have had to be an imbecile.

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1. Andrew Paul Ushenko, *Dynamics of Art* (1953) p.3.
It is proper to begin with a sketch of the field as it is conceived in this inquiry, and I am indebted to Professor Beardsley, one of the clearest of contemporary aestheticians, for as plain a manifesto within the prevailing English-speaking climate of opinion as could be proposed:

There would be no problems of aesthetics...if no one ever talked about works of art. So long as we enjoy a movie, a story, or a song, in silence - except perhaps for occasional grunts or groans, murmers of annoyance or satisfaction - there is no call for philosophy. But as soon as we utter a statement about the work, various sorts of question can arise.1

To be plain, although a considerable virtue, is not necessarily to be right, and Beardsley's view is open at least to the objection that the limitation of aesthetics to an investigation of questions raised by statements about works of art is arbitrary. Whilst it is probably true that works of art are the objects which most and best exercise the sensitivity and wit of people of taste, and which thus indirectly stimulate the activities of aestheticians, it is quite undeniable that there are objects of aesthetic attention and remark which are not works of art and which are nevertheless provocative of at least some of the problems central to traditional and to contemporary aesthetics alike. Sunsets, seascapes, flowers and

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faces are common subjects of critical appraisal. It will be convenient at this point to introduce as a working term the phrase aesthetic object, to refer to whatever is made the subject of aesthetic attention or remark - whether it is a work of art or not. This expression can now, I think, safely be used for work somewhat different from that to which it was put by Idealist aestheticians, for whom it marked a contrast between physical objects - painted canvas, or marble - and 'works of art proper' or 'aesthetic objects' which were regarded as necessarily incorporeal. More will be made of this in the next chapter; for the moment it is enough to point out that my use of the expression aesthetic object will carry with it no ontological commitment.

Amongst aesthetic objects works of art are undoubtedly the most discussed, and to my mind the most stimulating and satisfying; and since my central concern in this thesis is with works of art of a fairly specific and even concrete nature - namely, sculptures - I shall not enter any objection stronger than this caveat against Beardsley's dogma.

To quote another American contemporary, upon the relative importance of art and nature from the aesthetic standpoint:

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1 Some landscapes, especially in post-eighteenth century England are works of art; so are some Japanese trees and well-bred domestic animals. The distinction between art and nature is not one which a casual viewer can always draw easily and correctly at sight.
A work of art may possess great emotional expressiveness or it may have psychological overtones of other kinds which rivet our attention to it. Unlike most natural objects, it can have enormous cultural significance, embodying aspirations and traditions of a society or its most revered religious doctrines. Such a work as Dante's Divine Comedy sets forth an overarching conception of the significance and purpose of human life...we cannot say that art possesses these values exclusively and that nature is entirely devoid of them...Natural objects and scenes are often found 'moving' and the mystic can 'see a World in a Grain of Sand'. But on the whole, Nature is deficient in psychological and symbolic interest, compared to art.¹

The way in which art is formally distinguished from that which is not art, traditionally, by definition; the definition being constructed by theoreticians who claim to have made an appropriately careful preliminary study of examples. In Collingwood's words:

What is art?
A question of this kind has to be answered in two stages. First, we must make sure that the key word (in this case 'art') is a word which we know how to apply where it ought to be applied and refuse where it ought to be refused. It would not be much use beginning to argue about the correct definition of a general term whose instances we could not recognize when we saw them. Our first business, then, is to bring ourselves into a position in which we can say with confidence 'this and this and this are art; that and that and that are not art'.²

Unfortunately for the strict methodological propriety of Collingwood's and uncountable similar enterprises, concealed presuppositions so guide the very hand which points out 'this and

this and this' that the outcome inevitably has somewhat the look of a forced card. Moreover, a definitional approach to the problem of art by theorists of high and abstract principle may well lead to conclusions which, even within a generation, come to seem almost comically absurd. Collingwood is constrained by the intentionalistic presuppositions of his own theory to say such things as:

If Mr Skeaping hid his drawings in a coal-cellar and expected anybody who found them to shoot them full of bullet-holes, aesthetic theorists would say that he was no artist, because he intended his drawings for consumption, as targets, and not for contemplation, as works of art. By the same argument, the paleolithic paintings are not works of art, however much they may resemble them; the resemblance is superficial; what matters is the purpose, and the purpose is different. ¹

There seems little reason to doubt that the aesthetic theorists of the sixties would regard Mr Skeaping as eccentric if he were to behave in this outlandish way; but every reason to doubt whether they would deny that his drawings are works of art. Similarly, few of them - perhaps by now none of them - would question the received opinion that paleolithic cave paintings are to be numbered amongst the finest works of art in the cultural lexicon. Collingwood's prefatory remarks, if they were intended to herald a serious programme of research into the ordinary usage of his time, would be misleading if not actively tendentious; and it is difficult to see

¹ Ibid., p.10.
what other construction can be put upon them. It seems inescapable that the very definition which is avowedly yet to be constructed already determines the choice of examples from which it is destined to be derived.

To review briefly the pattern of traditional attempts to distinguish art from that which is not art: it is first of all noticeable that they divide fairly sharply into essentialist and non-essentialist essays. Essentialist definitions of art may be treated conveniently and perhaps not too misleadingly, as amounting to the proposal that some single nominated characteristic of a thing be regarded as the sole necessary and sufficient condition for that thing's being a work of art. Essentialist definitions of art lend themselves, by the aphoristic brevity which allegedly masks their subtlety, to perpetuation in the form of slogans, with which it was once the unbecoming fashion of aestheticians to bombard and belabour each other. Thus: 'Art is Imitation' 'Art is Revelation' 'Art is wish-fulfilment' 'Art is play' 'Art is Significant Form' and - the Croce-Collingwood theory which has not yet been fully wrested from lay acceptance in spite of its present philosophical disrepute - 'Art is Intuition-Expression'. In such accounts of the matter it is perhaps strictly improper to speak of definitions in terms of features or characteristics, since the copula in a paradigmatically essentialist slogan is said to be the 'is' of identity, not of predication; but this is a logical nicety the precise disposition of which lies well outside
the scope of the present work, and nothing that is to be argued here hangs upon it.

Some attempts to transfix the essence of art with a verbal pin are more, and some less, dauntingly deep. Erich Kahler writes:

Art is a human activity which explores, and hereby creates, new reality in a suprarational, visional manner and presents it symbolically or metaphorically as a microcosmic whole signifying a macrocosmic whole.¹

The Concise Oxford Dictionary (4th ed., 1952) by contrast proposes:

ART, n. Skill, esp. human skill as opposed to nature...

and

work of art, fine picture, building, poem, etc.

An objection must be entered here against this last implicitly honorific usage (a fine picture, etc.) although it has to be admitted that it is not by any means without basis in common speech. It seems to have encouraged the use of mixed definitions of a non-essentialist character which include the provision, as one of the necessary conditions for a work of art, that it shall exceed a certain threshold minimum of excellence. Such definitions are generally constructed out of a set of defining characteristics which are regarded as being severally necessary and jointly sufficient.

Typically: 'A work of art is whatever is made by man; is in one of the presently accepted art forms; and is better than a certain minimal (never specified, and probably unspecifiable) excellence'.

Objections can be brought against each of these provisions in turn, and especially against the last as potentially question-begging. For if that excellence which is sought is excellence of a kind peculiar to works of art, then this condition alone is sufficient; and if it is an excellence which is not peculiar to works of art then a good deal more needs to be said about it, in support of its candidature for a role in the definition. Many objects, works of art and others, are excellent draught-excluders, or excellent securities against loans; and neither of these excellences would convincingly clinch an otherwise inconclusive argument that something or other is a work of art. If the conditions can be refined without circularity, then well and good; but this does not seem, at least on the face of it, to be very likely. To speak - as is not uncommon - of the characteristic excellences of works of art (instead of the peculiar excellences of works of art) is merely evasive, since in the end such excellence must be specified, and it will then become apparent either that it is peculiar to works of

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1 Restriction to the classical five (poetry, music, painting, sculpture and architecture) is excessively cramping. One might prefer to emulate the catholicity of Thomas H. Munro, in 'Four Hundred Arts and Types of Art', JAAC, XVI (1957) pp.45-65.
art - in which case the question is begged - or that it is not, in which case we are entitled to ask again why this excellence, common to many kinds of thing, is definitive of art while other common excellences are not.

The traditional candidate for the role of that excellence which is most assuredly a necessary condition of works of art is beauty, and while it cannot plausibly be denied that any beautiful product of human skill with the conspicuous outward show of being a work of art is a work of art, it may pertinently be doubted whether the inclusion of beauty amongst the provisions is necessary. The word 'beauty' has not been effectively negotiable critical or philosophical currency for a long time, and there is no present reason to try to rehabilitate it. There is, besides, another good reason for resisting the inclusion of any kind of necessary excellence in the account we give of works of art: it is that such a move places us in a very serious logical predicament when we wish to say, as we not infrequently do, that something is a thoroughly bad work of art. That overtone of praise which is still clearly audible in a good deal of common speech has made possible the honorific hyperbole 'It's a work of art!' used of objects such as Ascot hats and wedding cakes, which upon any ordinary showing are not works of art. Most of us are content with this locution, yet would wish to be able to remark without logical impropriety that some of the objects in our national and provincial collections and
galleries are in every way downright wretched works of art. In doing so we implicitly reject excellence as a defining characteristic or necessary condition of art; and it seems that this is the most rational course to take. We cannot have our cake and eat it, unless we resolve only to eat it figuratively.

Much looser definitions even than this (human origin, acceptable or conventional form, and appropriate excellence) are possible. It might be held, for example, that some specified number - say, two or twenty - out of a list of condition-features none of which is individually either necessary or sufficient, will be collectively sufficient. But by now the notion of a definition has been so stretched as barely to be recognisable, and it is but a small loss to abandon it altogether and to apply the Wittgensteinian doctrine of family resemblances to the problem. Representative of contemporary philosophers who have made this move is Morris Weitz, who writes:

Is aesthetic theory, in the sense of a true definition or set of necessary and sufficient properties of art, possible? If nothing else does, the history of aesthetics itself should give one enormous pause here...

...aesthetic theory - all of it - is wrong in principle in

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1 Cf. Beardsley, 'The Definition of the Arts', JAAC, XX (1961) esp. p.185, for an argument to a similar conclusion, in contrast with much that is implicit in his Aesthetics (1958).

2 'The Role of Theory in Aesthetics', op.cit., p.145 ff. This article originally appeared in JAAC, XV (1956).
thinking that a correct theory is possible because it radically misconstrues the logic of the concept of art...

He goes on to argue that the concept of art is 'open textured':

I can list some cases and some conditions under which I can apply correctly the concept of art but I cannot list all of them, for the all important reason that unforeseeable or novel conditions are always forthcoming or envisageable.

And he concludes that:

To understand the role of aesthetic theory is not to conceive it as a definition, logically doomed to failure, but to read it as summaries of seriously made recommendations to attend in certain ways to certain features of art.

The key passage from Wittgenstein occurs in his discussion of games. I shall accept its implications for the theory of art without further ado, since it is no more possible in aesthetics than in any other branch of philosophy to question everything at once. One must address oneself - from a suitably advertised standpoint - to those problems which seem most exigent. Concerning board-games, card-games, ball-games, and so on:

Don't say: 'There must be something in common, or they would not be called "games"' - but look and see whether there is anything common to all, but similarities, relationships, and a whole series of them at that.1

And:

I can think of no better expression to characterize these similarities than 'family resemblances'; for the various

resemblances between members of a family: build, features, colour of eyes, gait, temperament, etc. etc. overlap and criss-cross in the same way. - And I shall say: 'games' form a family.¹

Similarly, I shall say: 'works of art' form a family. But how shall we determine whether an individual, picked at random, is a member of the family? According to W.E. Kennick it is quite simple; but I do not think that we should accept his amusing account of the matter uncritically:

Imagine a very large warehouse filled with all sorts of things - pictures of every description, musical scores for symphonies and dances and hymns, machines, tools, boats, houses, churches and temples, statues, vases, books of poetry and of prose, furniture and clothing, newspapers, postage stamps, flowers, trees, stones, musical instruments. Now we instruct someone to enter the warehouse and bring out all the works of art it contains. He will be able to do this with reasonable success, despite the fact that, as even the aestheticians must admit, he possesses no satisfactory definition of Art in terms of some common denominator, because no such definition has yet been found. Now imagine the same person sent into the warehouse to bring out all objects with Significant Form, or all objects of Expression. He would rightly be baffled.²

This is too facile. It is by no means certain, nor perhaps even very likely, that a majority of messengers would decide unhesitatingly that, say, the printed score of a musical work, or any given specimen of furniture, is a work of art. These reservations do not however

¹ Ibid., 1:67, p.32e.
bear dangerously upon the central thesis; they tend to show that picking out works of art is probably not such a simple matter as Kennick suggests; they do not show - as some of his opponents seem to have held - that it is an esoteric matter. One might remark too, in passing, that the demand for definitions only becomes clamorous when there is widespread uncertainty about the proper use of an expression. Kennick's point is more firmly made in another passage, and he seems only to have erred in supposing it a more modest achievement to understand English than is in fact the case. He writes:

We are able to separate those objects which are works of art from those which are not, because we know English; that is, we know how correctly to use the word 'art' and to apply the phrase 'work of art'. To borrow a statement from Dr Waismann1 and change it to meet my own needs, 'If anyone is able to use the word "art" or the phrase "work of art" correctly, in all sorts of contexts and on the right sort of occasions, he knows "what art is" and no formula in the world can make him wiser'.2

Fortunately for the present enterprise it is not necessary to explore in detail English usage in respect of all the arts - a formidable task - but will be sufficient if the approximate position

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1 F. Waismann, 'Analytic-Synthetic II', *Analysis*, II (1950) p.27. Waismann speaks, of course, of 'time' not of 'art'. He also says, and the observation is pertinent: 'Incidentally, the fact that one can know perfectly well 'what time is' without knowing all the idioms should make us hesitate to accept the formula "meaning = use".'

2 Kennick, op.cit.
Bird in Space (1919) by Constantin Brancusi
of sculpture within the complex can be marked out. That simple definitions are of very doubtful utility is once again illustrated very clearly by reference to the Concise Oxford Dictionary:¹

SCULPTURE, n., & v. t. & i., I. Art of forming representations of objects in the round or in relief by chiselling stone, carving wood, modelling clay, casting metal, or similar processes;...

The unsatisfactoriness of this account of sculpture was brought out quite dramatically during the nineteen-twenties, a full thirty years before the edition of the dictionary quoted here went to press, in the celebrated case of Brancusi v. The United States. The sculptor successfully resisted the imposition of import duty by U.S. Customs upon his abstract brass sculpture, Bird, as (since it was non-figurative) scrap metal.² Amongst the opinions expressed at the

¹ The Concise Oxford is chosen for its usual knack (here sadly absent) of going straight to the heart of ordinary current usage. Rather curiously, an earlier edition (1933) of the Oxford English Dictionary does not propose the representation clause, although it has idiosyncrasies of its own. For example: '.../"Sculpture" is/ Now chiefly used with reference to work in stone (esp. marble) or bronze (similar work in wood, ivory etc. being spoken of as carving), and to the production of figures of considerable size'. But surely there is nothing seriously wrong with 'small wood sculpture'? ² In some re-tellings of this by now almost legendary case it is held that the work was dutiable as a mechanical tool or instrument. Although the subject of much comment and frequent later reference (see, for example, the Dictionary of American Biography under 'Brancusi, Constantin') the case is rarely if ever given a full citation, and I have been unable to resolve the point conclusively.
hearings was Jacob Epstein's; that although a mere mechanic might have polished the work, only an artist could have conceived it. Mr Justice Waite seems to have been unimpressed by the genetic definition of a work of art implicit in this view and to have taken a more objective stand in his decision for Brancusi:

The object now under consideration is shown to be for purely ornamental purposes, its use being the same as that of any piece of sculpture of the old masters. It is beautiful and symmetrical in outline, and while some difficulty might be encountered in associating it with a bird, it is nevertheless pleasing to look at and highly ornamental.

His rejection of any account of sculpture in terms of the sculptor was sound on more than one ground. Apart from normal legal procedure and precedent, and the need to beware the incipient circularity of defining art in terms of artists and artists in terms of art, there is the matter of the doubtful moral and professional probity of the artist. Although his prestige is only moderately high in contemporary Western society, it has been higher and it has been very much lower.

In the early Middle Ages:

Common superstition did not encourage respect for art and artists. The 'mechanic' arts were low in the scale of labor, and masons and painters at the best of times were classed as 'mechanic' artisans. The idleness and mischief of masons was proverbial and indicated perhaps the vagabond reputation, which has clung to artists to this very day. Learned monks would cite the fourth chapter of Genesis to prove the descent of masons from the cursed progeny of Cain, and would derive the word 'mechanic' from 'moechus' an adulterer.¹

Where there is reason to think of the artist as part trickster or scoundrel - and tradition supplies at least some motive for thinking in this way - then this, coupled with an implicitly honorific use of 'sculpture' will be enough to engender mistrust of any allegedly necessary connection between sculptors and sculpture. The average man, and perhaps especially the average legal man, is morbidly sensitive to the danger of having his leg pulled by the modern artist.

Bearing in mind the time and the circumstances, Mr Justice Waite's criteria are extremely liberal and permissive. Even so, they would be inapplicable to much that is nowadays regularly exhibited, sold, bought, and criticized as sculpture. Our notions of what is pleasing to look at have changed quite radically during the last half-century, and now include a great deal which is neither evidently beautiful nor symmetrical in outline, and some which is not even for the same use as that to which the work of the 'old masters' was put. Before Dadaism, surely no recognised master attached an axe to his work in order that members of the public should be encouraged to give destructive vent to their sense of outrage!

The Concise Oxford, even as (anachronistically) liberalised by U.S. case-law, is not equal to the legislative task set by the impact of anti-art and non-art upon art, in the early years of the twentieth century. Every one of the practical criteria which would
have seemed unassailably secure to a Victorian or Edwardian theorist has succumbed to the erosive tides of the last turbulent half-century, and been either swept away altogether or reduced to the proportions of a nostalgic and perilous ruin. Even the final conviction that works of art must be of patently human origin has been exposed to a double attack. On the one side the work of higher apes, and of machines, has been accepted, exhibited, and for critical purposes treated as art. It is true that chimpanzees are presently more celebrated as painters than as sculptors, but this state of affairs seems unlikely to persist indefinitely; and machines have been responsible for acceptable works of great variety from the extremes of non-figurative patterning to naturalistic portraiture achieved by a photographic link to three-dimensional profile-cutters. On the other side, the objet trouvé and the Ready Made have provided the artist with a less laborious role as finder instead of maker. Strictly speaking, only the natural 'found-object', the wave-carved rock or branch or bone, is truly independent of the human hand, and is elevated at least to putative sculptural status by the mere act of being found, and appropriately exhibited. Marcel Duchamp's Ready Makes and Picasso's Metamorphoses, as well as most of their more recent descendants,
Assemblages, are for the most part human artifacts throughout, although their components were not originally fabricated for artistic ends. There is, in fact, a continuous spectrum of cases from the purest objets trouvés, through found-objects assisted, Ready Mades and Metamorphoses to constructions in which the human hand is as evident in every part of the work as in any traditional sculpture, and all that is novel is the use of raw materials not previously available to the artist.

It is not difficult to see how the application of 'family resemblance' tests reveals Picasso's Bull to be a work of sculpture about which, in the cultural climate of the nineteen-sixties, little pressure need be felt by aestheticians to behave as if a serious decision-problem calling for close argument were yet to be resolved. Regarded as a question of English usage whether or not The Bull should be referred to as a sculpture, the matter is settled. But not all such questions can even now be so summarily dismissed. That of the very pure objet trouvé is, I should say, a persistently nagging problem; and resistance to the classification of suitably exhibited natural formations as sculptures may yet be offered on at least the desperate ground that unless a line is drawn somewhere the 'family' of sculptures will expand to embrace the entire contents of the

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1 A good account of this genre, and of its history, is to be found in William C. Seitz, The Art of Assemblage (1961).
universe, and thereby forfeit any claim to useful distinctiveness.

A telling point in the debate about the status of objets trouvés, and one which is perhaps too often ignored or overlooked, is that they are assimilable into the family of works of art in two quite distinct ways. Objets trouvés are not merely objects which possess such aesthetic features as, say, agreeable texture or delicacy of pattern in common with (some) works of art. They are not even, at most, objects which possess such features in unusual abundance; although this is one of the ways in which they may be marked off from the general run of random objects. What may tempt us even more strongly than the possession of unusual 'intrinsic' aesthetic interest to regard objets trouvés as works of art, is a quite different consideration. Some works of art are thought noteworthy because they are seen as acts, or gestures, made in a context of cultural history. The art which innovates, or which makes a protest, or which comments wittily or slyly upon other art or upon the state of the arts in general, is appreciated as it would not necessarily be in another context, whether material or historical. Objets trouvés may well often lay claim to family membership in this second way; by being seen as having a role in a context, quite like the role which is assigned to some works which are deliberately wrought for the purpose. A critic might say, in effect, not only

'See how the action of wave and water on rock can be evoked with a
Ready Made, Bottle Rack (1914) by Marcel Duchamp
chisel', but equally: 'See how some of the effects of modern sculpture can be evoked (parodied, satirised, etc.) with a well-chosen pebble!'

A problem, which is perhaps even more complex in some ways, is posed by such an object as Duchamp's *Ready Made*, 1914 because of the ways in which it fits - and the ways in which it fails to fit - the logic of ordinary discourse about art, artists, and works of art. It is an object with a firm place in the history of contemporary and recent sculpture, and a subject of remark in all appropriate works of reference.¹ It is, nevertheless, neither more nor less than a bottle-drying rack, made originally by a craftsman for a quite mundane purpose. It was signed by a respected professional artist, Marcel Duchamp, and exhibited as sculpture amongst sculpture. Apart from the addition of his signature, Duchamp did not modify it in any way; he did not even contrive an imaginative metamorphosis such as Picasso's with the bicycle saddle and handlebars. Perhaps we should say that Duchamp's artistry consisted precisely in his flair for the right occasion to let well alone? After all, why should a sculptor be regarded as under obligation to manipulate his material in order

¹ A comprehensive bibliography of studies in which *Ready Made* (1914) is referred to either implicitly or explicitly as a sculpture would be - pointlessly for present purposes - very long. But see, for example: Alfred H. Barr, Jr., *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism* (1936); Carola Giedion-Welcker, *Contemporary Sculpture* (1960); and William C. Seitz, *op.cit.*
to produce sculpture if his material happens to come - as Duchamp pointed out - Ready Made?

Ought we perhaps to concede that this object is a sculpture, but argue that it is a sculpture by an anonymous craftsman which was (fraudulently?) appropriated by Duchamp? Certainly that it was made to serve a purpose would not ipso facto disqualify it, any more than a Cellini salt cellar or a Donatello candlestick is disqualified. But having been made for use without so much as a thought of decoration...? Yet what of the unconscious artistry of, say, ledger clerks whose pages of accounts are now carefully preserved as exemplars of the art of penmanship?

One might continue at exhaustive and exhausting length tracing out the pattern of resemblances, the ways in which this object is like other members of the family of sculptures, and the ways in which it is unlike. It would be necessary to bear in mind the dangers attendant upon an insufficiently considered positive verdict. If this bottle-drying rack is a sculpture, are all bottle-drying racks - and a great deal more besides - sculptures? Could we perhaps admit Duchamp's bottle-drying rack but hold back the flood of base contenders by making it a condition for the acceptance of bottle-drying racks that their candidature be endorsed by an artist whose reputation is securely founded upon less contentious
enterprises? But would this not be a quite new and dangerous principle? There is no precedent for the rejection of the offerings of unknown sculptors unless and until their claim to attention is reinforced by celebrated testimonial. And to say shortly that the context of exhibition ultimately and absolutely determines whether or not an object is properly to be classified as a sculpture is to evade the point that some objects, let us say for example the works of Rodin, are plainly sculptures wherever they happen to be discovered; whereas bottle-drying racks are not.

It was characteristic of Duchamp's sardonic, ambivalently creative and destructive intelligence, that he should have provoked these puzzles so early in the twentieth century game. In 1914 it was still received doctrine amongst philosophical aestheticians that works of art were essentially so, or not so, and to tease the argument not with counter-argument but with a simple gesture was surely to act with extraordinary prescience.

Some problems of classification within the arts are insoluble for the obvious reason that objects of such novelty that there are

1 As Georges Hugnet (trans. Margaret Scolari) writes, in an essay on Dadaism contributed to A.H. Barr, op.cit., p.19: 'In the first New York Independent's exhibition, 1917, he (Duchamp) entered a porcelain urinal with the title Fontaine and signed it R. Mutt to test the impartiality of the executive committee of which he was himself a member...But R. Mutt's entry was thrown out of the show after a few hours' debate and Duchamp, making the issue a question of principle, tendered his resignation'.
as yet no class-names for them, are nowadays prone to make their appearance. I have in mind such extravagances as Tinguely’s Study for the End of the World, which was reported by a Paris newspaper correspondent under the heading 'The Tradition of Gorgeous Legpulls'.

This dismissive formula is too sanguine; Tinguely pulls legs to some purpose, even if we cannot say quite under the aegis of which Muse. As McInnes writes:

It was a piece of music, in the sense that it was worked by a piano and made a noise; it was a sculpture, in that it contained plastic forms; and it was a painting, in that it included a canvas on which colours were to be spread. But the Author preferred to call it a Self-Destruction Machine, for it had this peculiarity, that it was capable of only one performance.

The masterpiece was composed of 12 electric motors, a quantity of scaffolding, numerous pulleys and conveyor belts, smoke bombs and - perched on top of its thirty foot high structure - a brand new refrigerator. When the pianist began to play the Study, the keys of the piano-board (being wired to electric motors) set the contraption in jerking motion. Gradually and majestically, the whole thing collapsed while the smoke-bombs released their fumes and pots of paint were splashed on the virgin canvas. At the end of the 30 minute performance, there was nothing but a tangled mass of ironwork, and a choking, deafened and mystified audience. In brief, the end of the world.

Whatever is to be said of such terata, it is at least clear that the concept of sculpture is open to the future. Decision problems arise and call for solution; or they temporarily defy solution. If we are asked whether a characteristic work by César Baldaccini in welded scrap metal is a sculpture, we shall answer

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without hesitation that it is. If we are asked whether Duchamp's
Ready-Mades are sculptures, we shall hedge. Even after half a century
of furious debate we can only aptly summarise the state of the
argument by saying: 'They are and they aren't'. The point for
aesthetic theory is that little or nothing hangs on the question
'What is (how do we recognise...) a sculpture?' Properly considered
it is a question for customs officials, for insurance companies and
for copyright agents to settle, with artists, critics and
aestheticians amongst the ranks of expert witnesses. The really
serious problems of aesthetics are not centred here, and it would
serve the purpose of a theorist of the criticism of sculpture well
enough - although perhaps be cramping to his style - if he were to
conduct his business entirely in terms of generally accepted
conservative paradigms. It is as an inheritor and user of the
English language, and perhaps as a potential litigant, not
specifically as a philosopher, that he is concerned with the question
whether this or that marginal object should be classified as
sculpture.

A rejection of essentialist answers to the question: 'What is
sculpture?' and a thoroughgoing scepticism about the ultimate utility
for any but legal or quasi-legal purposes of crisp definitions does
not, however, entirely resolve all that is traditionally discussed
under the rubric of 'the ontological problem'. In the next chapter
I shall examine the possible force of the objection quite commonly raised by theorists against the remarks of art critics, or by one critic against another: 'That is all very well, but it doesn't bear upon the sculpture considered as sculpture'.
CHAPTER II

SCULPTURES AS AESTHETIC OBJECTS

The attempt to determine the precise (and allegedly common) ontological status of all works of art has always been more than a mere routine philosophical enterprise comparable to the investigation of the ultimate nature of the objects of perception, or the objects of thought. Works of art have consistently aroused the passions of philosophers, from Plato who mistrusted their fraudulent power and would have banished poets from the Republic, to Wittgenstein who would '...whistle through a whole concerto, interrupting himself only to draw the listener's attention to some detail of the musical texture'. It is beyond question that art is deeply enjoyed by philosophers, no less than by other men, and one way of publishing satisfaction is to attribute value to those objects which afford it. But such expressions having been wrung from philosophers against a native caution, it is fitting that they should not be wasted upon inappropriate objects. A cautious gambler, staking his reputation for intellectual clarity and probity upon each utterance, will not wish to venture capital on non-starters.

Collingwood, as has been remarked, would have supposed it a waste of sense, because of the authors' alleged intentions, to attribute aesthetic value to cave-paintings; but not senseless to attribute - or at any rate for their authors to attribute - magical powers to them. Moreover, setting the purpose of the work aside, those drawings in coloured oxides upon the rock would not, in any case, for Collingwood, be true works of art. His Idealist programme was to give works of art a common ontology in terms of their supposed essence: imagination. It will be helpful to quote him at sufficient length to make his position absolutely clear on this point:

If the making of a tune is an instance of imaginatively creation, a tune is an imaginary thing. And the same applies to a poem or a painting or any other work of art. This seems paradoxical; we are apt to think that a tune is not an imaginary thing but a real thing, a real collection of noises; that a painting is a real piece of canvas covered with real colours; and so on. I hope to show, if the reader will have patience, that there is no paradox here; that both these propositions express what we do as a matter of fact say about works of art; and that they do not contradict one another, because they are concerned with different things. When speaking of a work of art (tune, picture, &c.), we mean by art a specific craft, intended as a stimulus for producing specific emotional effects in an audience, we certainly mean to designate by the term 'work of art' something that we should call real. The artist as magician or purveyor of amusement is necessarily a craftsman making real things, and making them out of some material according to some plan. His works are as real as the works of an engineer, and for the same reason. But it does not at all follow that the same is true of an artist proper. His business is not to produce an emotional effect in an audience, but, for example, to
make a tune. This tune is already complete and perfect when it exists merely as a tune in his head, that is, an imaginary tune. Next, he may arrange for the tune to be played before an audience. Now there comes into existence a real tune, a collection of noises. But which of these two things is the work of art? Which of them is the music? The answer is implied in what we have already said: the music, the work of art, is not the collection of noises, it is the tune in the composer's head. The noises made by the performers, and heard by the audience, are not the music at all; they are only means by which the audience, if they listen intelligently (not otherwise) can reconstruct for themselves the imaginary tune that existed in the composer's head.\(^1\)

It is not my purpose to rehearse here the entire parade of arguments for and against this view; it will be sufficient to refer to the objection, which I regard as utterly conclusive, that such a 'reconstruction' as Collingwood calls for is in principle impossible (whether the artist himself is cooperative or uncooperative, alive or dead) quite simply because there is and could be no appropriate object to reconstruct. It is of course perfectly true that a composer might create a tune, or a poet a verse, and keep it to himself; that is, not make it public by playing it, humming it aloud, speaking or writing it. But such an object is not an imaginary object in the required sense; it is merely a contingently private object which stands in a similar relation to the artist's audience as, say, a gramophone record of the tune locked up in the artist's safe. And just as we could blow the safe if we were

\(^1\) The Principles of Art, p.139.
sufficiently determined, so could we (in logical if not in moral principle) twist the artist's arm, or drug him, in order to make him give up his work to us. The poem or the tune that he divulges, willingly or unwillingly, will almost certainly be less perfect than the artist would wish; this is a commonplace of experience. He may 'have it in mind' to make improvements; but if so, and if he does not yet have the precise improvements in mind, then the improved work is not a candidate for the role of existent (though imaginary) work of art which is to be contrasted with the existent (uttered or actual) work of art, since not even the artist himself has yet attained access to the improved work. If he did have such access there is no reason why he should not make the improvements public; and indeed there is every reason in the psychology of artists to suppose him in general eager to do so. It does not follow from the artist's dissatisfaction with his actual production that there must already exist an imaginary work with which he would be better pleased; nor, a fortiori, that this hypothetical object is to be 'reconstructed' from the material which is presently available, either by the artist himself or by anyone else.

Not only is all this patently true of poems and tunes, the most plausible cases from Collingwood's point of view, but there are still the examples of painting and sculpture to consider. Here even the argument that original composition takes place in the head, mind, or imagination, is much less plausible:
An imaginary picture is not a picture and is of an entirely different logical type because the work of producing a picture cannot be done or, at least, completed without physical labour. But the task of making up a poem or a story or composing a tune may sometimes be over before these are spoken, sung, or written down... Of one who had never produced a public work it would be absurd to ask whether he might be a silent rival to all known artists. One who never exhibits his artistic skill is not a very 'pure' artist but a fraud.

We are never obliged to construct, or to reconstruct, what is, or was, in the artist's head because only in this way would something to which we necessarily have no direct access be thus made available to us. At most the work of art is an object to which we contingently have no access, because the artist happens to be reticent, or dead. The perfect work, of which the artist's actual work is but a feeble shadow, is not a peculiarly inaccessible existent object: it is an object which the artist has not yet made, and which it would therefore be absurd for his public to suppose that it might reconstruct.

The entire matter is raised, however, not so much as a live argument (nor yet as one which is quite certainly dead) but rather as part of an account of the present use of terms which is

1 Margaret Macdonald, 'Art and Imagination', PAS, LIII (1952-53) p.211.

2 Cf. Shelley, in Defence of Poetry: '...and the most glorious poetry that has ever been communicated to the world is probably a feeble shadow of the original conceptions of the poet.'
required for clarity in this unusually confusing semantic region.
The phrase **aesthetic object** has been much used until comparatively recent years, and indeed still is used from time to time, to designate an 'imaginary' work of art which is supposed to afford explicit contrast with the physical work of art, and to be the proper object - and the only proper object - of aesthetic attention. The view is classically put thus:

The unphilosophical mind means by the Mona Lisa a canvas that hangs on a wall in the Louvre; by the Venus de Milo a sculptured block of marble...and by a poem something he can find written on a certain page of a certain book ...The solution of the difficulties immediately apparent to the philosophical mind...is, of course, as follows: just as the theologian distinguishes between God, whom no man hath seen at any time, and the temple, shrine or icon, where God may be supposed to 'appear'; so we can distinguish the aesthetic object or experience - a sensuous form, together with meanings underlying the form, which exists only in the imagination, and what I would call the aesthetic instrument, which is the vehicle for the imagination, and a part of the physical world.¹

Parkers moves on at once to a family quarrel:

But while it is important that this distinction be made and its validity recognised, one must not go the lengths of a Croce in affirming that the instrument has nothing to do with art. For the appreciator, the instrument is essential, because it makes the aesthetic experience communicable; and preserves it for future generations. Without the instrument it would be a mere dream, unknowable and ephemeral. Imagination and physical embodiment are two aspects of a single fact.

But he nevertheless stands firmly with the party that has almost succeeded in acquiring sole rights to the innocent phrase *aesthetic object* to designate objects which are, necessarily, not any part of the physical world. The contrast thus generated between 'real' - that is to say, *imaginary* - works of art and 'real' - that is to say, *physical* - works of art has caused a great deal of confusion; and not merely confusion, endemic in philosophy, about the proper sense of that unhappy adjective, 'real'. There are, for example, consequent problems which can in the end only be dealt with by resorting to such desperate paradox as this:

> When people disagree whether something is obscene they are likely to be judging different works of art (constructed, as it were, from the same object), rather than reacting differently to the same work.\(^1\)

And:

> A proper judgment of obscenity in the arts can only be made by an informed and sensitive reader - not because only he can decide whether a work is obscene, but because only he can decide what work it is that is being judged.\(^2\)

Just as inside the fat man there is allegedly a thin man struggling to get out, it would seem that inside the novel which is


\(^2\) Ibid., p.546
brought to the attention of the Director of Public Prosecutions there is a legion of novels, severally accessible to readers who are differently informed and of different sensitivity - at least one of which may turn out to be obscene. Unfortunately, it seems that this imaginary roisterer cannot be put off by the conductor so that the other passengers in the vehicle may go their way without danger to public morals. If, as Kaplan seems elsewhere to suggest, it is not the published work which is, as such, obscene, but the expert witnesses' interpretations of it; then we might ask why it is not these very witnesses, or their recorded interpretations, which properly deserve to be made the subject of criminal prosecution. If that work of art which is obscene can only be smelled out by the expert nose, it is difficult to grasp how it may be supposed likely to deprave and corrupt the common man. The fallacy at the root of this absurdity is the supposition that it is interpretations which are the subject of judgment; whereas of course what is judged is the work of art: interpretation is not even a prelude to judgment but a part of it.

I do not wish to suggest that questions about obscenity in the arts are always trivial, or easily settled, but only that they are questions which are rendered effectively insoluble, except by a clumsy casuistry, if we accept the doctrine of multiple imaginary aesthetic objects within physical embodiments or vehicles.
One way of avoiding the possibility of a clash of understanding would be to abandon the jargon *aesthetic object* and invent afresh; but while this would be a laudably irenic move it would surely be a betrayal of sense. The objects of aesthetic attention and remark are, upon any principle or canon of linguistic rationality, *aesthetic objects*; and it is undesirable that past abuses should be condoned by resigning the phrase to exploitation as the personal slave of Idealist aesthetic theories.

Essentialist theses - whether Idealist or not - that works of art have a common and peculiar ontology, are no longer philosophically acceptable.¹ It is much less a commonplace of contemporary opinion, however, that positions of a somewhat essentialist character or flavour, in relation to individual arts - in particular to sculpture - are untenable. Some present argument that the use of the term 'sculpture' is more complex than any single simple formula will elucidate is certainly called for; and especially is it important to emphasize that it would be a gross oversimplification to maintain - in reaction against the excesses of Idealism - that sculptures, regarded as *aesthetic objects*, are necessarily material objects.

The most usual way in which we apply the term 'sculpture' is, undoubtedly, to certain objects which are spatially extended in three dimensions and of perceptible mass. Relief sculptures, however, may so diminish in projection as in this respect to meet and even overlap very heavily textured paintings, montages and assemblages. The line here, if it is to be drawn at all upon the crude single criterion of relief projection, must be somewhat arbitrary. The extension of a visible thing in a third dimension seems almost to entail corporeality; and this is incidentally as true of physical paintings - as contrasted with, say, blue 'expanses' like the sky - as it is of sculptures. The imaginations of the writers of science-fiction have long since given us the 'tri-image' or 'visiprojector', by means of which intangible three-dimensional visibilia are projected into clear sight in a definite and explorable spatial relationship to observers; but it is by no means obvious that such notions should be regarded merely as lying beyond our present technology and not, like time machines, as logically incoherent. To speak of a sculpture is, more often than not, to speak of a substantial object; or at the very least to speak of something with a very intimate relation to a substantial object. It is as a rule to speak of something which is either visible or
tangible and commonly - not invariably - both.¹ Sculptures are, in all proper uses of the term, public objects. They are identified without any necessary reference to particular observers, in such a way as to make it always intelligible to speak of two, or three, or any number of observers seeing the same sculpture (although, contingently, not from the same viewpoint at the same time). As to the metaphysics of the question of the ultimate nature of the objects of perception, I shall adopt an Austinian caution:

There is no one kind of thing that we 'perceive' but many different kinds, the number being reducible if at all by scientific investigation and not by philosophy: pens are in many ways though not in all ways unlike rainbows, which are in many ways though not in all ways unlike after-images, which in turn are in many ways but not in all ways unlike pictures on the cinema-screen - and so on, without assignable limit.²

After-images sit a little awkwardly in this company, being, like pains, arguably things that we have rather than things that we perceive. It makes very good sense to speak of an existent pen, rainbow, or cinema-picture which, for one reason or another, we do not happen to perceive; but very doubtful sense to speak of an after-image which we do not perceive. But however this may be,

¹ Naum Gabo says 'I can make a sculpture with the rays of the sun', but he does not say how. See Of Divers Arts (1962) p.64; which is the text of his 1959 A.W. Mellon Lectures at the National Gallery of Art, Washington.

² J.L. Austin, Sense and Sensibilities (1962) p.4.
Austin's policy seems sound, even if one of his examples is in a certain way infelicitous. These epistemological considerations will be taken up again in the discussion: 'Pictures, Models, Measures and Matches' and in subsequent chapters dealing with the perceptual basis of criticism in painting and sculpture: for the moment it would be pointlessly provocative to insist upon nailing a standard to the mast.

Many of the sculptures that we see and touch, criticize, buy and sell, insure, recover from the sea or accidentally break, are material objects in the plainest possible understanding of the expression. There is only one archaic Greek marble sculpture which is called, in English, The Calf-Bearer (illustrated frontispiece) which stands now in the Acropolis Museum in Athens, about which it is proper to say - amongst uncountable other things - that after wartime safe-keeping it lay for some time in several pieces in the basement of the National Museum. But there is, in addition to the (illustrated) unique original token, a type called The Calf-Bearer, about which the Museum Guardians feel no concern lest enthusiasts should fingermark it. It is theft and mark resistant. We are not all perfectly agreed about how to describe its qualities, whether as those of the original carving of the first half of the sixth century B.C., or as those of the present weathered and partly broken object; but we have no doubt that in one form or another it would survive even the total loss of the original token. We only
say that the Phidian chryselephantine statue of Zeus was magnificent, rather than that it is magnificent, (or vulgar, or whatever), because we have no really trustworthy facsimiles of the lost object but only a tissue of hearsay and guesses. If we had plaster casts in every museum we should undoubtedly say that the Phidian sculpture is magnificent (or vulgar) and yet refuse to admit that what we are judging is to be identified with a particular material object in Berlin, or New York, or Athens, or anywhere.

The type-token distinction, particularly as it touches the question of the honorific imputation of novelty or originality, is treated more fully in chapter five; it is mentioned here merely in presentation of the good prima facie case that the use of the term 'sculpture' is not easily restricted to contexts in which particular ostensible material objects are the subject of remark. Even theorists who disallow the conceptual machinery of the type-token distinction upon one count or another must deal with the problem of editions of bronzes from a single mould, with later pirate casts, and with all the variety of possible copies and replicas made by various processes. Is Rodin's sculpture The Burghers of Calais in Calais or in London? Is Degas' Girl Dancer of Fourteen in Paris or in Copenhagen? The evident absurdity of attempting to answer these questions as put brings out the required point, whether a resolution of the difficulty in terms of types and tokens is
Unique Forms of Continuity in Space (1913) by Umberto Boccioni
regarded as acceptable or not. Yet another obstacle for whoever would simplify discourse about sculpture by a bold stroke of legislation is that he must somehow accommodate within his scheme the distinction between an object *simpliciter* (whether type or token) and an object in a historical and cultural context. An original formal device, like an original strategy at chess, can only occur once. Copies of it, although in an important sense 'indistinguishable' from it, are not *honorifically* original sculptures or strategies.  

But perhaps the most striking and least contentious illustration of the ineluctable complexity in our use of the word 'sculpture' arises out of movement and the way in which objects designed to undergo rapid temporal change are assimilable for critical purposes to the class of *performances* more readily than to that of *material objects*.  

The representation of movement in sculpture is a challenge to the artist which has been variously and ingeniously met, from the stiff forward thrust of the leg of the archaic *kouros* to the formal Futurist contrivance of Boccioni's *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space* (1913). It would be an egregious mistake, however, to suppose that the 'movement' of such objects is a perceptible aesthetic

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1 This argument is developed in Chapter V. It connects also with the point made in Chapter I; that works of art (and, or including, *objets trouvés*) may be seen as pointed within a context, as being in some ways more like events than objects.
phenomenon, comparable to the movement of a dancer; although we certainly have an idiom in which the movement (not in conspicuous quotes) of, say, a baroque design, is a feature to which attention may be directed. Whatever is meant by this - and there is no doubt that several things may be meant - there remains outstanding the simplest and most literal use of the word. Movement in sculpture, not the mere representational or symbolic convention, nor the invitation to a movement of the spectator's eye but the actual displacement of the parts of the work relative to each other and to an external reference-frame, has only a sporadic history and has not until quite recently been taken fully seriously as an aesthetic medium, or art.

From very early times there has been animated statuary, ranging from religious images capable of potent or terrifying gesture, to the dancing and cavorting figures upon public clocks and musical boxes. Cellini claimed a high dramatic success with a figure on castors:

I placed the statue, and...waited for the coming of the King [Francis I]. The Jupiter was raising his thunderbolt with the right hand in the act to hurl it; his left hand held the globe of the world. Among the flames of the thunderbolt I had very cleverly introduced a torch of white wax...[W/then the night came I set fire to the torch, which, standing higher than the head of Jupiter, shed light from above and showed the statue far better than by daytime.

At length the King arrived...I made my prentice Ascanio push the Jupiter toward his majesty. As it moved
smoothly forwards, my cunning in its turn was amply rewarded, for the gentle motion made the figure seem alive... The king exclaimed at once: 'This is by far the finest thing that has ever been seen...'\textsuperscript{1}

But in none of the historical instances, awesome, ingenious, delightful or grotesque as they have been, does it ever seem seriously to have been supposed that the movement of the object constituted a distinct aesthetic phenomenon comparable to a dance. Cellini's Jupiter is, in the end, judged stationary by daylight; clocks, prancing dolls and musical boxes have never been regarded by contemporaneous critics and commentators as exemplifying a distinct aesthetic medium; and the animated devices of magic and religion have not provoked any very searching reappraisals of traditional aesthetic theory. It was not until the twentieth century that there emerged a form of sculpture, the mobile,\textsuperscript{2} which was designed to be seen in motion and not to be arrested for the purpose of conducting a really business-like critical appraisal of the sculpture 'as such'. The sculpture, as such, moved.

The American sculptor Alexander Calder is generally credited with this innovation, although, like the internal combustion engine, it has about it an inevitability in the context which makes the

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Benvenuto Cellini, \textit{The Life of Benvenuto Cellini}, tr. John Addington Symonds (1925) p.330.
\item For an account of the origins of the term mobile (in which it is attributed to Duchamp) see: James Johnson Sweeney, \textit{Alexander Calder} (1951) pp.32-35.
\end{enumerate}
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Steel Fish, Mobile (1934) by Alexander Calder
election of heroes difficult. Nevertheless, Calder's name is rightly prominent, and his early Steel Fish (1934) is illustrated opposite. Still photographs of mobiles are, more surely even than Plato's paintings of beds, at such a remove from reality that whoever has not seen a fine one in action will derive only a very poor impression of the effect. Such constructions as this have been assimilated into the family of sculptures as a branch which still lacks an entirely satisfactory theoretical basis for its appreciation and judgment. Even as lately as 1955 Patrick Heron, a critic of by no means reactionary opinions, was still inclined to say with apparent diffidence what one might have supposed by now to warrant full confidence:

I think it is true to say that the movements of which Calder's tin leaves on their long stalks are capable are of far greater aesthetic interest than the shapes themselves.1

It is one of the central contentions of this thesis that aesthetic verdicts may be passed upon the movement of mobiles as confidently as upon any aesthetic object of any kind whatever: that it is quite unnecessary to regard the assimilation of mobiles into the family of sculptures (rather than that of, say, ballets) as a move which entails commitment to an essentialist theory of sculpture which would throw doubt upon the propriety of such remarks as Heron's. It

1 The Changing Forms of Art (1955) p.222.
is, incidentally, an interesting pointer to the rate and pattern of
verbal coinage in the arts that we also have the improbable term
stabile, the meaning of which may be roughly and a little
paradoxically rendered: 'mobile which is not designed to move'. We
have entered a situation in which viewers who are thoroughly
familiar with the cultural and historical context are able to see
certain stationary non-figurative objects as representing a
momentarily arrested movement, in analogy with the familiar way in
which any bronze Deity is seen to be frozen in the act of hurling
his trident or thunderbolt. There is a distinct extension in the
range of permissible interpretation of sculptures, attributable
basically to the invention of the mobile.¹

Even more bizarre are the constructions of Tinguely and others;
such as trundling objects, self-propelled by internal electric motors
and directed by electronic circuitry into autonomous and highly
enigmatic movement amongst their spectators. These extravagant
concepts shade off, through single performances on the pattern of the
Study for the End of the World, described in the previous chapter,
into a distinct contemporary genre. Auto-destructive Art, as it has

¹ Strictly speaking Calder's own stabiles, so named by Hans Arp
in 1931, anticipated his mobiles by a year or two. Nevertheless
the term mobile seems to have logical priority and stabile to be
a dependent notion, to the precise extent that the word usefully
connotes something importantly different from the traditional,
unmoving, sculpture.
been called, may well be thought to have interesting, perhaps morbid, psychological and sociological determinants; but it cannot thereby be removed altogether from under the aesthetician's nose. A cardboard construction subjected to the corrosion of an acid-drip, such as has been made by Gustav Metzger in London - and appears in many variant forms all over the world - is very arguably, and even exhibitably, sculpture. Nevertheless, unlike an object exposed only to natural decay (and judged in some particular temporal appearance) such a thing is designedly a performance, from its pristine factory or studio condition to its final ruin. How we are properly to appreciate such a performance, especially if it is too lengthy to be kept under consistent observation for an entire 'show', is far from clear; and moreover it is quite certain that we have as yet no agreed canons by which to compare auto-destinations _inter se_, unless perhaps for ingenuity and extravagance.

All sculpture, of course, is 'auto-destructive' in a very thin sense. That is to say, it is subject to the corruption of time, even if it escapes the vandal. Everything flows, as Heraclitus said, but stone and bronze flow very slowly indeed, and are almost paradigms of the permanent. Nor do the changes wrought by time upon a sculpture inevitably amount to a deterioration. A really fine patina, as every sculptor knows, takes time. Bronzes are buried in the ground, or left in the foundry urinal in order to accelerate patination; but any good manual of technique will admit that its
recipes are in general inferior to the mere lapse of a few favourable centuries. Nevertheless, the average uncared-for sculpture has a finite life the vicissitudes of which no doubt present a discrete spectacle sub specie aeternitatis.

The position of auto-destructive art in the family of sculptures is in some ways analogous to that of happenings in the family of theatrical entertainments. When an audience is expensively assembled, invited to turn its chairs in such a way as to place the stage behind it, the instructor then leaving the room permanently, has the audience witnessed or participated in a cabaret act? A problem, no doubt, for Actor's Equity, and for licensing authorities; but not for aesthetics. A critic who remarks 'How inventive (or how unimaginative) it all was!' has made an aesthetic remark about an aesthetic object the precise logical or legal status of which is of no professional concern to him. Similarly, the critic who remarks 'What a gay (solemn, graceful, etc.) movement that sculpture has!' is only trivially faulted by a freak legal ruling that mobiles are not sculptures; and he is not in the least faulted by a logical ruling that a movement is not a material object, or that it is not an object of the imagination. The critic's answer is ready: 'No, indeed it is not; but nevertheless how gay (solemn, graceful, etc.) it is!'
In summary of the assumptions and arguments of this and the previous chapter, it might be said that:

Firstly: the definition of 'art' and of 'sculpture' is a matter for the dictionaries and specialist works of reference, whose proper duty it is to keep pace with and accurately reflect the usages which emerge from the sprawling general debate which is conducted by English speakers, and which is occasionally highlighted by dramas of litigation.

Secondly: these debates may well benefit both in urgency and clarity from the expert witness of philosophers, but nothing of profound metaphysical importance hangs upon the outcome. In particular, the elucidation and clarification of the use of the word 'sculpture' is not a matter of uncovering any essential property of sculptures which is common and peculiar to them.

Thirdly: the unacceptable essentialist ontology postulated for works of art by Idealist aestheticians cannot be replaced by an equally clumsy Materialist ontology. 'Sculpture' is a term used, quite properly, of - at least - material objects; of types of which material objects are tokens; of objects as seen in relation to a context; of objects seen as events in a context; and of the movements of objects (whether seen in relation to a particular historical and cultural setting or not).

And fourthly: consequent upon these considerations, the familiar theoretical obstacle placed in the way of certain kinds of
aesthetic remark - that they do not bear upon the sculpture as such - is to be treated with the deepest suspicion. We simply do not have a sufficiently monolithic concept of 'sculpture', much less of 'art', to make of such a move anything subtler than a legislative fist within a philosophical glove.

Aesthetic objects, then, are the objects of aesthetic attention and remark; and they may be of as many logical types as there are kinds of thing in the world. Sculptures occupy an indefinite but connected range of the many-dimensional spectrum of kinds of thing, and they are the subject of special consideration in two ways throughout the remainder of this thesis. They supply the bulk of the examples and lie at the focus of attention in the next three chapters, which attempt to clarify the notions of aesthetic attitude, aesthetic remark, and verdict in a way which evidently has a much wider application than to sculpture alone, or even to the whole range of visual arts. And the final chapters attempt to deal with a problem which is peculiar and central to the criticism of sculpture and which, if properly solved, may be expected to throw light upon much that is puzzling in current critical practice.
Aesthetic remarks, I shall argue, are utterances the understanding of which is intimately bound up with the notions of the aesthetic attitude and of aesthetic sensibility. They have many forms from monosyllabic exclamation of an almost sub-linguistic kind to that of the complete, sometimes elaborate sentence in which a subject is located and characterized.

Sometimes a critic will draw attention to what we would perhaps wish to call a natural feature of something - such as its shape or colour - but he will do this for aesthetic ends or purposes, having exercised sensibility in the selection of the feature for remark. Thus, he might say upon being offered a paint by a colour merchant: 'It is violet - that certainly won't do!' That the colour is violet (if it is) is a matter of fact, and its discrimination involves no exercise of taste at all, but only of quite commonplace powers or capacities. Sensibility is involved in seeing that what 'won't do' about the paint, in terms of some projected scheme of decoration, is its hue, rather than, say, its intensity or its gloss. To have picked out and drawn attention to the hue is, in envisageable circumstances, to have exercised taste; even when the uttered remark embodies no conspicuously aesthetic terms, and might,
in other circumstances, not have been an aesthetic remark at all. 'It is violet - that certainly won't do!' could very well be the form of rejection of a colour for use in a projected colour-discrimination test to which only, say, yellow and green are appropriate; a rejection involving no question of aesthetic sensibility whatsoever.

Something of the diverse range and character of aesthetic remarks in the professional critical mouth, even in relation to a single art, is shown by the following examples. They are taken from contexts in which there is no doubt - in a general sort of way - about what is afoot: critics are here supposing themselves to be, and no doubt are, exercising and exhibiting aesthetic sensibility, although in strikingly different ways and phrases.

But as you pass, these wooden scarecrows come to life. They radiate personality...¹

And:

What can be seen is that he's leaning forward more than a third of a cubit; and this by itself is the worst and most intolerable error that useless, vulgar craftsmen can make...And they say that one of the feet of the Hercules is buried, and the other looks as if someone has lit a fire under it.²

¹ Hugh Gordon Porteus, 'Wooden Scarecrows', a review of the sculpture of Peter Startup in The Listener, 29 August 1963.
² Benvenuto Cellini, The Life of Benvenuto Cellini. Cellini is regaling Duke Cosimo with an account of the imperfections of his rival Bandinelli's Hercules and Cacus.
And, of Anton Dominik von Fernkorn's monument to the fallen in the cemetery at Aspern near Vienna, where Napoleon suffered his first defeat:

His...Dying Lion shows that Fernkorn possessed a fiery spirit like Rude's and Rethel's. In its dramatic forms the huge figure of the animal, with its almost human face ravaged by grief, is artistically superior to Thorwaldsen's Lion of Lucerne.¹

And:

...the formless and much pierced metal-ware of Adams, Milani, Garelli or Riopelle is destined, I suppose, to take its place in corridors or chambers. And what is the fate of the Double Money Box, with removable lid, by Dalwood? Under the bed.²

Some of these remarks do more than baldly characterize the work from an aesthetic point of view, or in evidently aesthetic terms: they embody verdicts upon it. I shall argue in Chapter V that aesthetic verdicts are aesthetic remarks which have certain special functions (notably those of response-prediction, commendation and recommendation), but that in forming them taste is exercised no less than in the formulation of those aesthetic remarks which do not function as verdicts. In brief, aesthetic verdicts are aesthetic remarks - whatever else they may be - and they are responsive to the same preliminary moves in analysis.

The first problem which must be clarified in an investigation of the logical features of aesthetic remarks is that of the relation between what might be called patently aesthetic terms (such as 'pretty', 'ugly', 'delicately patterned' and so on) and the aesthetic use of terms. Terms which are not conspicuously aesthetic or moral or economic, or indeed of any proprietary kind, make up the bulk of any natural language, and most of them may be put to aesthetic use. The great majority of English words and phrases are, like tools, apt to a wide variety of purposes; although there are, as in any natural modern language, certain terms and expressions which may be said to have a characteristic if not a quite exclusive use in aesthetic contexts.

Frank Sibley, in a notable paper, lists useful examples of terms (as it happens, but not of necessity, adjectives) which often find aesthetic use, as:

Unified, balanced, integrated, lifeless, serene, somber, dynamic, powerful, vivid, delicate, moving, trite,
sentimental, tragic.

He then nominates a handful which, he claims, 'function only or predominantly as aesthetic terms'. These are:

graceful, delicate, dainty, handsome, comely, elegant, garish.

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2 Ibid., p.421.
3 Ibid., p.422.
And these he contrasts with words 'which are seldom used as aesthetic terms at all'. It is incidentally symptomatic of the uncertainty surrounding the distinctions that are to be made here that Sibley employs the locution '...used as aesthetic terms' (my emphasis); a formula which knits together rather than unpicks the logical tangle. Indeed, he comments in a footnote: 'I shall speak loosely of an "aesthetic term", even when, because the word sometimes has other uses, it would be more correct to speak of its use as an aesthetic term'.

Nevertheless it is plain from his argument - indeed one might almost say it is his argument - that elegance (for example) cannot but be an aesthetic feature of any object which exhibits it, whereas squareness (let us say) cannot be an aesthetic feature. His list of non-aesthetic terms, to contrast with the aesthetic terms exemplified above, runs:

red, noisy, brackish, clammy, square, docile, curved, evanescent, intelligent, faithful, derelict, tardy, freakish.

I believe that although this contrast is a plausible one, its logical force has been much exaggerated, largely as a result of a too summary dismissal of the dangers implicit in speaking 'loosely' of terms instead of, 'more strictly', the use of terms. A similar

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1 Ibid., p.421.
2 Ibid., p.422.
point has indeed already been made by H.R.G. Schwyzer, although Sibley has evaded the full force of his objections by demonstrating a certain amount of cross-purpose between Schwyzer and himself. At any rate it would seem to be common ground that such an adjective as 'pretty' (not to raid Sibley's hoard) is one of which aesthetic use is made upon such an overwhelming majority of its appearances that one might as well call it an aesthetic term - so long as it is remembered that such use, though usual, is not unavoidable. In its adverbial role ('pretty well, thank you') it means 'moderately'; and even as an adjective ('a pretty kettle of fish') its import may be quantitative rather than qualitative.

The logically crucial step in Sibley's treatment of patently aesthetic terms is to regard them as having the proper function of referring to an object's aesthetic features, which are contrasted with its non-aesthetic features; these latter being features which 'do not depend for their recognition upon an exercise of taste'.

For reasons which will become apparent I shall prefer the expression 'natural features' to 'non-aesthetic features', although both locutions have their disadvantages, and they are certainly not synonymous. Sibley argues, persuasively:

When we cannot ourselves quite say what non-aesthetic features make something delicate or unbalanced or powerful or moving, the good critic often puts his finger on something which strikes us as the right explanation. In short, aesthetic words apply ultimately because of, and 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 of sensibility. Whatever kind of dependence this is, and there are various relationships between aesthetic qualities and non-aesthetic features, what I want to make clear...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.¹

It is a corollary of this last contention, and surely a true one, that it would be quite impossible to construct any descriptive catalogue of the natural features of an object - say, a vase - such that someone who had not seen the vase would be able to say that it is deducible from its possession of the natural features listed that the vase must be, cannot but be, delicate, or elegant. Sibley contrasts this state of affairs with other cases, arguing that some list of conditions (in terms of natural features) would be sufficient for the application to an appropriate object of such non-aesthetic terms as 'intelligent' or 'lazy'; and that even defeasible concepts such as 'offer' and 'acceptance'² are condition-governed in that

¹ Ibid., p.424.
adequate specification of rather complex circumstances, in particular that there is no voiding feature present - assuming that this can be known - will logically guarantee that an offer or an acceptance has taken place.

Nothing, in terms of non-aesthetic, or natural, features, will guarantee that an unseen vase is elegant; although sufficiently complete descriptions of it will make the possibility appear a likely one. In such a case, however, if the description is comprehensive enough, we may be put virtually into the position of a viewer who does see the object, and may well be able in practice to form sound opinions about its aesthetic qualities. It is, nevertheless, in such a case, because we are able to imagine the object and not because of any implications derivable deductively from the description, that we are able to make plausibly apt aesthetic remarks about it.

All this is in a way quite familiar. The view that it is impossible to make logical transitions from descriptions to normative judgments is a hallowed one. Sibley's contribution in this respect is to cast the discussion into contemporary philosophical terms and - perhaps more importantly - to take something of the force of valuation away from the traditional concept of a normative judgment. His 'aesthetic terms' are still arguably value-uncommitted, in spite of being 'aesthetic'. It is open to a critic to say 'Elegant, Ah!' or 'Elegant, Bah!' or indeed 'Elegant, so what?' Elegance, in his view, may be a perceptible feature or characteristic of something
much as, or as value-neutrally as, squareness or symmetry is a perceptible feature or characteristic of it. The difference, he holds, is that whereas sufficient conditions for the application of such an epithet as 'square' or 'symmetrical' can be given, no set of conditions can be established such that the applicability of an aesthetic term like 'elegant' is guaranteed. Viewers with sensibility see that something is elegant; viewers without do not. And presumably, whether a viewer does or does not see that a suitable object is elegant may be regarded, reciprocally, as criterial of whether or not this viewer is a person endowed with aesthetic taste or sensibility.

An unfortunate effect of this interesting argument is that it tends to turn our attention away from the important fact that the natural features of objects may not merely explain or account for its aesthetic features, but may actually be aesthetic features of it. Aesthetically sensitive commentators often draw attention to the precise shape or colour of something with the same point - that is, aesthetic point - as they draw attention to elegance or garishness. Sibley's way of putting the matter will not do; even though it be granted - as it surely must - that there are some feats of discrimination which do, and some which do not call for the exercise of aesthetic sensibility. The objection to it can be put quite briefly: it is that the distinction between natural and other qualities (taking the regulation of the appropriate epithets by sets
of sufficient conditions to be criterial of the 'natural') is not the same as the distinction between natural qualities and aesthetic qualities. It is neither true that no natural quality (condition-governed) can be an aesthetic quality; nor is it true that all non-natural qualities (not condition-governed) must be aesthetic qualities. In order to bring out these contentions more clearly I shall distinguish 'natural' qualities from others in a somewhat different way.

Let us think, now, in terms of the construction of facsimiles of sensorily perceptible objects. If someone is set the task of imitating or copying an object of sense-perception as exactly as human skill in sensory discrimination will allow (assuming that he has adequate mechanical competence) we might say that the difference between what I have called natural features and others is expressible in this way: any mistake or failure to discriminate a difference between a natural feature of the original and the corresponding feature of the attempted facsimile must issue in imperfection in the copy, whereas failure to make non-natural discriminations need have no such consequence. Lack of taste may result in the production of an imperfect copy, but it need not. It is not necessary - although it is undoubtedly helpful - to see the graceful tension or the flaccidity of a line in order to copy it correctly or to pick out the best from a selection of slightly differing copies of it. If an observer is able to discriminate between one object and another
which differs from it in any sensorily perceptible respect by more than a normal discrimination step then he can (in principle) make or select a perfect facsimile even if in the process he notices no aesthetic features whatever in either the original or in the copy, and a fortiori totally fails to perform a single feat of aesthetic discrimination.

The notion of a 'discrimination step' introduced here is, of course, somewhat indeterminate. The size of such a step cannot, in principle, be specified exactly. Tea-tasters and wine-tasters, as well as expert wool-dyers, make finer discrimination steps within a certain range than do most of us, and each one of us is able to perform some humble feat of discrimination which scarcely anyone else can manage, even if it is only to pick out a particularly well-known face in a crowd. The point is that a capacity to make uncommonly fine discrimination steps, as contrasted with coarse ones, does not mark a sensitivity to non-natural, as contrasted with natural, features. One does not, assuming normal vision, come to see the gracefulness of a curve by looking harder in the way in which one might come to see the smaller local variations in its direction and intensity by looking harder. A powerful glass is not normally, for objects of moderate size, an aid in the discrimination of differences in aesthetic quality although, as Dr Watson was tediously instructed, it might help one to distinguish a defunct cigar recently enjoyed by a red-haired officer with a lisp who had been cashiered for
embezzlement in Afghanistan in 1871, from a more commonplace butt.

The attractiveness of this criterion of the natural sensorily perceptible property - its relevance to facsimile construction - is much higher at an abstract theoretical level than at the practical level where specific candidates for the role of natural feature are under examination. It happens to be a well-attested psychological fact that people ordinarily make visual discriminations (for example) very much in terms of how they see things, or of what they see them as. The familiar figure-ground relationship illustrates the point: the viewer who sees a candlestick will make a copy of the diagram which differs in predictable and easily-explained ways from that of the viewer who sees the original diagram as a pair of kissing faces. Or the viewer who is given sample felts of the same colour, one in the shape of a leaf, the other in the shape of a donkey, will match the former with a greener and the latter with a browner sample from a presented range.

Of course, if the samples or the diagrams are put into appropriate proximity and scrutinised minutely it will often prove possible for viewers to correct discrepancies to some extent, even without tumbling to an alternative interpretation of what they are looking at which would make their task much easier; although it may well be the case that there are often - perhaps always - residual failures in fine discrimination which are only ultimately explicable in psychological terms since the physiological capacity to make that very
discrimination under different conditions can easily be established. These reservations do not seem, however, to have any important relevance to the aesthetic issue; except in that failure to make discriminations within the normal range between the natural properties of things - as for instance in the case of defective colour-vision - will tend to issue in abnormal aesthetic judgments.

The real difficulty about the 'facsimile' test for distinguishing the natural sensorily perceptible properties of things comes when we try, not to demonstrate but to say, in general terms, which properties are natural and which are not: which are the perceptible features about which mistakes would necessarily show in a copy, and which are those about which discrimination-failures would be of no consequence. It is intuitively obvious that an aesthetically insensitive person who did not notice a clash of colours might nevertheless have missed no natural feature of what is before him, but it is far from obvious how one is to establish the principles upon which characterizing words or phrases already in use are to be divided into those which do, and those which do not refer to natural features.

We might stipulate, as a rough rule, that 'natural sensorily perceptible features' are to be understood as those in respect of which normal observers are able to make normal, testable, discriminations. But what is the contrast here? If normal observers cannot distinguish between the appearance of two objects, then we
must say that there is no perceptible difference between them, and that the notion of non-natural perceptible qualities is a wholly bogus one!

A resolution of the dilemma seems to be possible in this way: if there is a perceptible difference between two objects (let us say a supple curve and a slack curve), then anyone with normal sensory powers will see, if he looks closely enough, that there is a difference. What such a person may be unable to do is to recognize the difference as an aesthetic difference, and to give it an aesthetic characterization. He may be able to make or to select facsimiles which demonstrate that he sees the difference, and even to offer descriptions or characterizations which show that he sees it (for example: 'This curve is thinner just here, and straighter just here, and...') but he may nevertheless not recognize or be capable of remarking the aesthetic difference that while one curve is supple the other is slack.

A point of the utmost importance must be made here. It is that while the appropriateness of most of the paradigmatically aesthetic terms in Sibley's list will depend upon the natural features of the object characterized in such a way that objects which differ in their aesthetic features will also differ perceptibly to any physiologically normal viewer, with or without taste; it is nevertheless not the case that all apt remarks which distinguish aesthetically between two objects draw attention to a difference
which has a corollary in the natural sensorily perceptible features of these objects. This claim is less paradoxical than it sounds. Raising the hat, for example, may be elegantly courteous in a certain situation; in another (perhaps a second after the person to be saluted has passed haughtily by) it may appear exaggeratedly and comically derisive, although there is no perceptible difference between the bodily movements in the two cases, but only in their timing in relation to the context of events.

Or, to take another case, a work of art which breaks new ground in a laudable way ('exciting, fresh, original', the critics say) may be copied very exactly with results about which the critics are not enthusiastic in the same way. It is not that the copy is seriously held to differ from the original in any of its natural sensorily perceptible features, but merely in the relation it bears to the objects and events which constitute its cultural context.

And finally, if it is not to labour the point unnecessarily, today's elegant gown or smart suit is often tomorrow's amusing fancy dress.

To summarize the point: we sometimes remark that something is for example garish, it being an exercise of taste to notice this, and we try to persuade a companion who has not seen it in that way that he should do so. We draw his attention to the brightness of colour, the amount of decoration, and so on, in an effort to win his agreement that it is indeed a gaudy or garish thing. Sometimes,
however, we try to get our companion to see things as we do, or to see 'eye to eye' with us, or to see matters 'in the same light' (in a word, to agree) by drawing attention to the object's context. 'This would no doubt be a stimulating and lively addition to X's scheme of interior decoration', we say, 'but in Y's rococo dining room it is garish'.

The difference between an object of aesthetic attention seen simpliciter and seen in relation to a context - whether physical or historico-cultural - has been minimised, exaggerated, and ignored by aestheticians. It may be minimised by treating entire physical contexts as natural objects of aesthetic attention, and regarding complete works of art within such contexts as internal features of it, much as the work itself has internal features. This stratagem effectively dismisses difficulties arising from the contrast of object simpliciter with object in a specific environment, by postulating effectively different objects of aesthetic attention and thereby resolving threatened contradictions of aesthetic terms. But this move does not dispose of the somewhat different case of the object seen in relation to or in terms of a historical and cultural context. It is not quite plausible to say that pointing out the impressive originality of a particular work of art is a concealed means of drawing attention to a feature of our civilization. At most we may feel inclined to say that what is discerned is a feature of the work which only a civilised person could be expected to see.
The difference between an object simpliciter and an object in a cultural and historical setting may be exaggerated; and indeed it has been exaggerated, especially by formalistic theoreticians whose policy in this respect is legislative. The modern locus classicus for stipulative theorizing of this sort is, of course, Bell's surprisingly influential book:

...to appreciate a work of art we need bring with us nothing from life, no knowledge of its ideas and affairs, no familiarity with its emotions.¹

But the view that contextual considerations can easily and sharply be distinguished from intrinsic considerations is by no means a peculiarly modern one. It is, indeed, virtually implicit in any theory of intrinsic or objective beauty from Plato's onwards, whether beauty is held - as by Plato - to be a transcendental quality or - as by Osborne - an emergent one. Osborne writes:

...beauty itself is simply the extension of that principle of emergent perceptual configuration immediately apprehensible by unreflective intuition...²

That 'beauty itself' is not simply any such thing is made clear a little later, when Osborne brings out the importance of 'unity' to those perceptual configurations which are properly called beautiful. But if beauty is not at least (whatever else) an emergent objective

¹ Clive Bell, Art (1949) p.25.
² Harold Osborne, Theory of Beauty (1952) p.122.
property in Osborne's view, then he has undoubtedly failed to make his position clear. He writes:

A work of art is a successful work of art in so far as it achieves an organisation of perceptual material into a single organic whole from which emerges a new and unique perceptual quality in awareness. In so far as it falls into two or more discrete sections not organically connected in experience but related only discursively, it fails as a work of art. As, therefore, beauty was defined as the characteristic excellence of a work of art, we may now describe it more concretely as the property of being an organic unity to perception.¹

Whatever it may be, quite precisely, that is being argued here, it certainly seems plain enough that such a view cannot be maintained consistently with an admission that the time, place and circumstances in which an object is known to have been made and is presently examined will affect the range of aesthetic epithets or characterizations properly applicable to it. I hope neither to minimize nor to exaggerate the relevance and importance of these considerations, nor to ignore them nor to legislate concerning them, but simply to offer an account of aesthetic remarks which accommodates them.

It will be convenient at this point to recapitulate some of the main contentions so far. Aesthetic remarks, it has been claimed, are remarks which generally speaking cannot be appropriately made in novel situations except by viewers who have, and exercise, aesthetic

¹ Ibid., p.125.
sensibility. Normally and correctly functioning sense organs by means of which the observer is able to make all ordinary discriminations between the natural perceptible properties of things are perhaps a necessary, but certainly not a sufficient condition for making aesthetic remarks to which the assent of other normal observers can rationally be invited. Amongst the linguistic resources which are available to us for making aesthetic remarks are certain conspicuously aesthetic terms - of which 'pretty' might serve as an example; and amongst the features of objects, especially perhaps those features to which aesthetic terms evidently apply, are some whose special dependence upon particular natural perceptible features is at once obvious to the eye of taste. In illustration of this last contention: the skilful critic says 'It is the absence of clearly defined features which gives the bronze face that aloof, timeless grandeur', or 'The texture is too rough and irregular for so small a work - it breaks up the calm flow of the surfaces into irrelevantly agitated facets'.

In such cases the critic will often be said to have 'put his finger on something that strikes us as the right explanation'. Our puzzle is, however, to understand how it is that pointing out natural perceptible features can be called 'giving the right explanation' of an aesthetic feature, while at the same time maintaining that not even conspicuously aesthetic terms - much less aesthetic remarks in general - are appropriate in virtue of any set of natural perceptible features providing the sufficient conditions for their application.
We are inclined to insist either that these terms or remarks must be, after all, somehow condition-governed; or else that whatever the critic has achieved it is not the explanation - in any logically crisp sense of the word - of the correctness of the aesthetic term he applies or the aesthetic remark he makes.

There is something to be said in support of both these inclinations; and no doubt when it is said it will be easier to see how the dilemma should be resolved.

To consider the second inclination first: we may be disposed to argue that the presence of no natural perceptible feature, or set of features, explains the presence of an aesthetic feature. And, of course, if we read 'explains' as 'provides the sufficient conditions for...', then we do not have an explanation. But it is noteworthy that Sibley uses a very natural locution when he says that the good critic puts his finger on something which strikes us as being the right explanation. If we think in psychological, not in logical terms, then we might have a viable sense of 'explanation' which meets the case in hand. This is not to propose psychological explanations of the relation of dependence between natural features and aesthetic features, which would be absurd, but to suggest that human beings with a similar nature and training will in fact accept as explanatory arguments which are not logically compelling. Thus, for example, we sometimes account for our saying that Jones is in love by pointing out certain things about his behaviour - perhaps just one telling thing about it - which
will at once strike mutual friends as being the right explanation for, and as completely justifying, an assertion about Jones which they had perhaps not previously felt any inclination to make themselves and which they may even have resisted until their attention was drawn to 'the explanation'. At the same time, it would be impossible to argue that behaving in just this way constitutes a sufficient condition for the application of the predicate 'is in love'. Not even taking all that is already known about Jones, together with the new observation, do we have a logically sufficient condition for saying that he is in love; merely what a lawyer might call 'very strong grounds for presumption', or a physician 'marked indications'.

Does this imply that we can never be certain that anyone is in love? If the only certainty we will allow is the certainty of logical inference from sufficient conditions, then it does; but of course this is not the only kind of certainty. Even if we have residual doubts about Jones (who may, after all, have his eye on the girl's Post Office Savings Account, or be acting under the influence of drugs or hypnosis), we can have none about Heloise, or Romeo. It would be foolish to ask whether perhaps these paradigm lovers were really deceiving their Abelard or Juliet.

The other impulse, to say that the application of aesthetic terms is somehow governed by logically sufficient conditions specifiable in terms of the natural sensorily perceptible features of things, may not be prompted by a conscious and explicit thirst for a single kind of
certainty so much as by the obvious parallels which obtain between patently aesthetic terms such as 'pretty' and other terms which we are able to apply with confidence in spite of the extreme openness of their application-conditions. 'In love', for example, or 'polite'. We might see every event which takes place in a certain situation and yet, occasionally, ask ourselves: 'Was it a polite deference that he showed, or an impudently mocking one?' Most often, however, we simply know, having been taught from infancy how to manipulate concepts of manners. We know that there was impudence, and sometimes we can explain how we know: 'Didn't you see him wink?'

Much as we learn what is courteous and what is rude, from exemplars, so do we learn what is pretty - and what is graceful, elegant, dainty and so on as well. Amongst our earliest lessons in the cradle are 'See the pretty rattle...see the pretty lady'; and, a little later perhaps: 'See the nasty toad...don't pull horrid faces...'.

The patently aesthetic terms listed by Sibley are terms the first use of which is learnt through ostended exemplars, just as the use of many other characterizing expressions is learnt. We are sometimes entitled to be just as sure that a little girl is pretty as that she is disgracefully rude, although in neither case can we say what facts or events are quite certainly sufficient to justify the application of the epithet. What we can say - sometimes - is what particular fact or event justifies the use of the epithet on a particular occasion: 'justify' here meaning not 'provide the logically sufficient condition'
but simply 'account for what was said, and secure the consent of similarly trained people to the usage'.

Sibley seems to be mistaken in supposing that the absence of logically sufficient application-conditions for aesthetic terms is what marks them off from other kinds of linguistic device. This is quite clearly not the case: politeness, for example, is at least as 'open' in relation to bodily movements as prettiness is in relation to natural perceptible features. He is certainly not mistaken, however, in arguing, as he does, that the words and gestures of the art critic, including the pointing out of natural perceptible features whose recognition requires no exercise of taste, sometimes have the effect of bringing others to see aesthetic qualities that they had not previously noticed, or to consent to the application of aesthetic terms which they had not previously thought applicable. Such an observation seems to be in no way theoretical, speculative or contentious but to be one of the facts of common experience which it is the role of theory to give an account.

The key to the central dilemma about aesthetic remarks - that they seem to be remarks about which it is intelligible to hold that they may be correctly or incorrectly applied and at the same time remarks which cannot, in principle, command general assent - seems to be this: conspicuously aesthetic terms such as 'pretty' are not the most helpful but, on the contrary, the least helpful expressions from the point of view of grasping what is peculiarly aesthetic about aesthetic remarks.
They are unhelpful both because their freedom from logically sufficient application-conditions is shared with other non-aesthetic kinds of term, and - more importantly - because their firm anchorage in paradigms during the learning process makes for relatively easy agreement about their use. Their 'condition-freedom', indeed, often gives little more space for manoeuvre than another's chains. Who would feel that the selection of a pretty girl from a crowd was a particularly exacting task, or one in which his choice was very likely to be challenged?

What is peculiarly aesthetic about aesthetic remarks, whether they make use of patently aesthetic terms or not, is that their function is to draw attention to something about an object which only an aesthetically sensitive person would, in the given context, respond to. The feature provocative of such a response may well be a natural sensorily perceptible feature of something - its colour, say. It has already been pointed out that, under appropriate circumstances, such an utterance as 'It is violet!' may be an aesthetic remark, notwithstanding that whether the object is or is not violet is a matter of fact about which we are not severally entitled to our different opinions. Freedom is introduced in this way: whoever would not make that aesthetic remark is not thereby committed to denying that the object is violet, but to denying that 'It is violet' is an appropriate, or correct aesthetic remark. 'A man of taste would not make that remark about it at all', an objector might say,
'but something quite different: for example...

This state of affairs, it is true, differs from that which obtains when patently aesthetic terms are at issue. One might challenge the contention that something is elegant either by insisting that it is not elegant, or by holding that its elegance has, in the specific context, no aesthetic relevance. One might say, for example: 'When you describe the solution to that problem as "elegant" you are not making an aesthetic remark. It is a clear, simple, and correct solution; but when you characterize it - quite permissibly - as "elegant" you are not exercising aesthetic taste but some other kind of taste.' The onus of argument would be upon the challenger here, and it is not clear without having a quite specific case in mind, how he would proceed. But if, for example, he were to argue successfully that the original critic would not have called the solution 'elegant' if it had in fact been a false or stupid solution, then he would seem to be some way towards establishing that he was using 'elegant' non-aesthetically.

Or, to alter the example, it is surely clear that the stage-Soviet critic's 'Elegant, bah!' to Paris fashions is a moral remark.

These examples are not, it must be confessed, overwhelmingly convincing; but this is surely unsurprising in view of the fact that they aim to make a logical point of which practical advantage is relatively seldom taken. Terms like 'elegant' function, as Sibley quite rightly points out, 'only or predominantly as aesthetic terms'.
It will evidently not be easy to find a convincing non-aesthetic use for a term which is seldom if ever ordinarily given a non-aesthetic use. At the same time it must not be assumed that the practical difficulty is a logical one - that 'aesthetic terms' cannot be given non-aesthetic use.

What it is to exercise aesthetic sensibility or to adopt an aesthetic attitude, will be investigated more fully in the next chapter: but one thing which is certainly involved, and which this discussion of aesthetic remarks brings out, is that aesthetic remarks are personal or - to risk a dangerous word - subjective, in the sense that we cannot be constrained to make them or assent to them by arguments cast in the form of logical deductions from the natural sensorily perceptible features of objects. On the other hand some of them are virtually impersonal or objective in that they are rooted in paradigms. It would be almost senseless to deny that suitably chosen paradigm objects are pretty, dainty, elegant, or whatever. Almost, but not quite, senseless: for if it could not intelligibly be denied that a certain dress was elegant or girl pretty, then these assertions would not be aesthetic remarks but statements of fact. To keep the aesthetic 'game' in play we need something very like facts to give our arguments sense and direction, but not so like facts that our judgments are no longer a matter of taste.

Such material is supplied in part by our physiology and in part by our training and cultural experiences. We are likely to agree
quite substantially about what sort of thing is, for example, sexually attractive; what is, in this or that social situation, the 'done' thing (or the said thing); and which suits are smart and which works of art sentimental. Most of these things we are taught, although there are no doubt some which we do not need to be taught or in connection with which instruction is only nominal. Kant's view, that the aesthetic judgment is subjective yet it nevertheless makes a universal claim,¹ bestrides the paradox of agreement about matters of taste, and fails to resolve it. His implication that our common humanity guarantees that all disinterested viewers would assent to any judgment of aesthetic taste appears to overlook the consideration that we all, as individuals, are ultimately and irreducibly various, and that if we were not there would not be any matters of taste at all but merely what we should all regard as matters of fact. In a world of similar disinterested critics a judgment that something or other is beautiful would be as much or as little 'aesthetic' as a judgment that it is blue, or that it tastes of garlic, or that the sum of its angles is two right angles.

We can assent, it seems, to many of the things that Sibley says, as well as to most of those that Schwyzer, who seems to disagree with him, says. Sibley concludes:

¹ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Aesthetic Judgement*, passim.
...it should not strike us as puzzling that the critic supports his judgments and brings us to see aesthetic qualities by pointing out key features and talking about them in the way he does. It is by the very same methods that people helped us to develop our aesthetic sense and master its vocabulary from the beginning. If we responded to these methods then, it is not surprising that we respond to the critic's discourse now. It would be surprising if, by using this language and behaviour, people could not sometimes bring us to see the aesthetic qualities of things; for this would prove us lacking in one characteristically human kind of awareness and activity.¹

And Schwyzer:

Why, in trying to get you to see that my vase is graceful, can I not simply say that it is long and thin and slightly curved? Well surely because you can see this for yourself. But if I cannot in these circumstances talk in this way, how is it that I can talk in the following way, for example: 'You see how very gradually the stem curves downwards and outwards...'? Clearly because this is something you might not have seen, something you might not be able to say. Now why should this be so, when what I said contained no 'aesthetic' terminology? The only things at issue seem to be 'easily discernible non-aesthetic features'. But there is more to it than this. Roughly, you did see that the stem curved downwards and outwards gradually; you did not see how gradually it curved. And the moral of that is that when I say 'You see how very gradually...', I am engaging in aesthetic discourse, although I am not using any words that are tailor-made for that purpose...I make no transition from aesthetic to non-aesthetic talk, for I do not talk 'non-aesthetically' at all.²

And:

² 'Sibley's "Aesthetic Concepts"', p.75.
There is no transition, in criticism, from aesthetic to non-aesthetic use of language. There need, therefore, be no puzzlement about how such transition is possible.\textsuperscript{1}

An aesthetic remark, then, is a remark about an object of sense-perception which - amongst other things to be discussed in the following chapter - could not, in principle, be held to be \textit{logically inadmissible} or to be \textit{demonstrably untrue} when it is uttered by a competent language-user. Of course, when teaching a child his mother tongue we are entitled to fault him. If he says: '\textbf{Not} a pretty rattle' we shall suppose his temper to have deflected an already uncertain linguistic grasp, and shall in general be inclined to correct him - if not upon this then upon another suitable occasion. But if his father agrees with him, remarking that the pink is too insipid and the shape too visceral for the rattle really to be counted \textbf{pretty}, then we shall do well to pay close attention. Perhaps upon reflection we shall agree; and even if we do not we certainly cannot \textbf{prove} him wrong. If we could, then it would not be an \textbf{aesthetic} question whether the rattle is or is not pretty, nor would it be an exercise of aesthetic sensibility to pick out those natural features which most powerfully incline us to say that the object is pretty, and with the aid of which we might yet hope to win agreement.

\textsuperscript{1} Ibid., p.78.
This criterion of the aesthetic - that taste or sensibility is intimately involved while conclusive demonstrability is not - serves to distinguish aesthetic remarks from some others. Descriptive remarks, for example, employing terms for the use of which sufficient conditions can be established, are not, as such, aesthetic; although aesthetic use may be made of them. But this criterion does not distinguish the aesthetic at all clearly from certain other non-descriptive areas or regions of discourse: notably those of manners and morals. Some further clarification will therefore be attempted in the following chapter.
CHAPTER IV

AESTHETIC ATTITUDES AND AESTHETIC SITUATIONS

The exercise of aesthetic sensibility or discernment in noticing and in drawing the attention of others to the aesthetic features of aesthetic objects by means of or in terms of aesthetic remarks, may be regarded as the outcome of the adoption of an aesthetic attitude within an aesthetic situation. Here are the central concepts of aesthetics, which are in the end only to be fully explained and understood in terms of each other. Not one of them is in any clear sense unshared by the others evidently foundational to the subject, and the exploration of their logical relations will certainly expose what a polemical or programmatic aesthetic theorist will incline to condemn as 'circularities'.

Not all circles are vicious, of course; and I hope that the mutual dependence of the notions of aesthetic sensibility, aesthetic remarks, objects, attitudes and situations will be seen to form a pattern - a circle, if the reader insists - which is commodious, complex, interesting, and entirely innocuous.

Aesthetic situations, I shall argue, are not sharply marked off from other situations, nor are aesthetic attitudes easily and conclusively distinguishable from all other attitudes. As Wittgenstein puts it:
...imagine having to sketch a sharply defined picture 'corresponding' to a blurred one. In the latter there is a blurred red rectangle: for it you must put down a sharply defined one. Of course - several such rectangles can be drawn to correspond to the indefinite one. - But if the colours in the original merge without any hint of outline won't it become a hopeless task to draw a sharp picture corresponding to the blurred one? Won't you then have to say: 'Here I might just as well draw a circle or a heart as a rectangle, for all the colours merge. Anything - and nothing - is right.' - And this is the position you are in if you look for definitions corresponding to our concepts in aesthetics or ethics.¹

In aesthetics at least, however, if not in ethics, it seems over permissive to say that in general anything is right, and excessively stern to insist that nothing is: the picture is not quite utterly blurred. Indeed, one important and often overlooked factor contributing to its indistinctness is surely that it is a historically moving picture, but one which moves so deceptively slowly that we are prone to confuse ourselves by snipping stills from different epochs and unwittingly superimposing them. If we restrict attention to the aesthetic concepts of a sufficiently local time and place we may well often find ourselves able to trace out the main contours with a good deal of definition and without culpable insensitivity to the subtler transitions.

The mid-twentieth century European, or Western standpoint has been tacitly adopted, and fortunately for this section of the inquiry the notion of an aesthetic approach to the objects of perception is a

¹ Philosophical Investigations, I:77, p.36e
relatively modern one - if a couple of hundred years will pass as a
moment in historical perspective. In Jerome Stolnitz's words:

The central and animating idea in modern aesthetics, which thereby sets it off from traditional theory, is
that of a distinctive mode of perception, 'aesthetic
disinterestedness'. This concept, which is logically
foundational in the aesthetics of Kant, Schopenhauer,
et al., is first brought to light and developed by the
British, beginning with Lord Shaftesbury in the early
years of the century. Aesthetic theory as we know it
comes into being, for now all of the arts as well as
natural objects are considered together, so far as
they are objects of such perception.¹

I hope to show that the notion of a 'distinctive mode of
perception', if this is even quasi-physiological, is untenable;
although the notion of a distinctive attitude to the world, regarded
as a disposition to attend to certain kinds of perceptible features,
is not. But first of all, the idea of disinterestedness.

A great deal of effort and imagination has gone into the
elucidation of precisely what may be meant by 'disinterestedness' in
an aesthetic context or connection; but I think it may fairly be said
that it remains extremely obscure, however clear it may have been in
the writings of those political theorists from whom it seems to have
derived. Kant writes:

TASTE is the faculty of estimating an object or a mode
of representation by means of delight or aversion

¹'A Third Note on Eighteenth Century Disinterestedness',
JAAC, XXII (1963) p.69.
APART FROM ANY INTEREST. The object of such a delight is called BEAUTIFUL.1 /original emphasis/

But for Kant this condition of disinterestedness seems to have hung upon the viewer's indifference to the actual physical existence of the object contemplated:

The delight which we connect with the representation of the real existence of an object is called interest. Such a delight, therefore, always involves a reference to the faculty of desire, either as its determining ground, or else as necessarily implicated with its determining ground. Now, where the question is whether something is beautiful, we do not want to know, whether we, or anyone else, are, or even could be, concerned in the real existence of the thing, but rather what estimate we form of it on mere contemplation (intuition or reflection).2

To this it must be objected that the notion of a disinterested judgment is founded rather upon the possibility of ignoring or discounting personal interests than upon the possibility of having none. Indeed, it is hard to see how one could ever assure oneself that one had no interest whatsoever (moral, economic, erotic, proprietal, fetishistic, etc.) in something: but on the other hand there is no insurmountable problem about assuring oneself that, whatever one's recognised or concealed interests may be, one's judgment has not been swayed by them. This is achieved by relating the judgment to public norms or standards. A lover who judges that his beloved is beautiful may assure himself that his interest in the

1 Critique of Aesthetic Judgement, First Moment, Sect.5.
2 Ibid., Sect.2.
matter has not distorted his aesthetic judgment by investigating whether other competent judges who do not share his interest nevertheless judge similarly.

On the view that disinterestedness is not the literal absence of any interest but rather freedom from any distortion of judgment such as is attributable to interest, it is apparent that one might judge interestedly or disinterestedly of an object in connection with which he is 'concerned in the real existence of the thing', and equally so in connection with an object whose 'real existence' does not concern him in the least. The lover may disinterestedly judge his beloved beautiful, and he may disinterestedly judge an abstract picture beautiful, even though he desires the girl and is the proud author of the picture.

I shall not attempt any deeper analysis of the notion of disinterestedness, beyond this reference to its patent unclarity. Disinterestedness in some sense or other does seem to be an 'animating idea in modern aesthetics', but the senses evidently vary between writers, and the notion has appeared in progressively more fashionable disguises as times and jargon have changed. Early in the twentieth century something with at least a close family likeness to Kantian disinterestedness was presented in psychological dress in a
paper which became extraordinarily influential and which has been much anthologised and echoed in more recent writings: 1

Psychical Distance, Bullough wrote, does not imply an impersonal, purely intellectually interested relation... On the contrary, it describes a personal relation, often highly emotionally coloured, but of a peculiar character. Its peculiarity lies in that the personal character of the relation has been, so to speak, filtered. It has been cleared of the practical, concrete nature of its appeal, without, however, thereby losing its original constitution.

And:

...the whole sensual side of Art is purified, spiritualized, 'filtered' as I expressed it earlier, by Psychical Distance. The most sensual appeal becomes the translucent veil of an underlying spirituality, once the grossly personal and practical elements have been removed from it. And - a matter of special emphasis here - this spiritual aspect of the appeal is the more penetrating, the more personal and direct its sensual appeal would have been BUT FOR THE PRESENCE OF DISTANCE. The emphatic devices are Bullough's.

This psychological-hydraulic theory ran parallel with, neither corresponding quite exactly nor conflicting sharply with theories deriving more directly from the philosophical tradition which, via Croce, had come to lay heavy emphasis upon the imagination and its products. Roger Fry, more influenced by Idealist philosophy than by experimental psychology for all his choice of scientific jargon, wrote:

Man has...the possibility of a double life; one the actual life, the other the imaginative life. Between these two lives there is this great distinction, that in the actual life the processes of natural selection have brought it about that the instinctive reaction, such, for instance, as flight from danger, shall be the important part of the whole process, and it is towards this that the man bends his whole conscious endeavour. But in the imaginative life no such action is necessary, and, therefore, the whole consciousness may be focused upon the perceptive and the emotional aspects of experience. In this way we get, in the imaginative life, a different set of values, and a different kind of perception.

The distinctive mode of perception that is aesthetic, then, is in some way detached, indifferent to the actual existence of the objects of contemplation, disinterested, impersonal, purely imaginative, spiritualized by psychical distance, or characterized by some other adjectival expression belonging to the same loose but recognizable cluster. In all its imprecision it is summarized admirably by Hunter Mead:

It has long been axiomatic that the aesthetic 'mood' or attitude is one of detached, disinterested, and impersonal contemplation. Its detachment is established by the fact that...we are for the moment released from the ordinary practical concerns of daily living...The aesthetic mood represents a pause, as it were, during which we momentarily suspend this normal cause-and-effect series...by detaching ourselves from this ends-and-means chain of events. The disinterestedness of this mood arises from the contemplative manner in which we normally perceive aesthetic objects. We are content to be absorbed in beholding or in listening, and there is no desire to possess, utilize, or in any way exploit the aesthetic object for our selfish ends or private 'interests'. The impersonal character of the aesthetic

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mood in turn grows out of that disinterestedness. Our personal desires, goals, hopes, and fears are temporarily suspended (or at least rendered largely impotent), while in more intense aesthetic experiences we may become absorbed in the object to such an extent that we are 'taken out of ourselves' or 'carried away' and the self or ego is eliminated from consciousness.

To be 'carried away' is, in the tradition going back to Plato, the business of the artist rather than of the observer: in Protagoras it is said of the poet that 'There is no invention in him until he has become inspired and is out of his senses, and the mind is no longer in him'; but perhaps creativity and receptivity are thought to make use of the same psychological machinery, much as the dynamo and the electric motor are basically the same machine. It is worth remarking, too, that self-forgetfulness is often noticeable in individuals who are not in aesthetic situations at all: someone who has adopted a moral attitude to some abominable scene which rouses him to indignant action or comment might also be 'carried away'. The elimination of the self or ego from consciousness (supposing Mead's formulation to be intelligible) is at least not obviously a sufficient condition of an aesthetic attitude.

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1 The slide from talk of a mood or attitude, which are dispositional notions, to talk of an experience, which must be OCCURRENT, is significant here. It will be noticed again shortly in a quotation from Hospers, and will be argued that it is a carelessness which either expresses or perhaps generates an important muddle.
2 Aesthetics (1952) p.13.
Before commenting further upon the notion of a distinctive type of aesthetic perception it will be helpful to consider yet another important idea which has run a parallel course to that of 'aesthetic disinterestedness', and which even seems sometimes to have been taken for a theoretically central component of it in so far as the visual arts are concerned. This is the concept of the innocent eye. Deriving ultimately from Berkeley, via Ruskin, the basic teaching is quite clear although - as will be argued in due course - false. Ruskin writes: ¹

The perception of solid form is entirely a matter of experience. We see nothing but flat colours; and it is only by a series of experiments that we find out that a stain of black or grey indicates the dark side of a solid substance or that a feint hue indicates that the object in which it appears is far away. The whole technical power of painting depends on our recovery of what may be called the innocence of the eye; that is to say, of a sort of childish perception of these flat stains of colour, merely as such, without consciousness of what they signify - as a blind man would see them if suddenly gifted with sight. ²

A radically different philosophical approach to the problems of perception will be made in Chapters VI and VII: for the moment it will be sufficient to remark that Ruskin did not have the advantage

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² The error is pervasive. Compare Henry Moore, 'Notes on Sculpture' in Henry Moore, ed. Herbert Read (1962) p.xi: 'The child learning to see first distinguishes only two-dimensional shape...'
of reading the collection of case-histories of cataract removal assembled more recently by Von Senden,¹ which throws serious empirical doubt on the plausibility of the notion that 'a blind man...suddenly gifted with sight' can be said to see anything at all, much less distinct 'flat stains of colour'; although he certainly has acquired a new physiological capacity to learn to see, which he previously lacked. The empirical point would perhaps have appealed to Ruskin even more strongly than the philosophical argument, for he was certainly concerned in The Elements of Drawing to develop and expound an effective method of teaching and learning a craft and not to offer, except by implication, a philosophical theory of perception.

In fact, his method is effective and is still in use, with or without benefit of Berkeleyan rationalization. A device familiar to academically trained artists is that known as 'drawing by the spaces left'. When a difficult passage is reached in a representational drawing - say a sharply foreshortened limb - it is often helpful to disregard the limb that is being drawn and to concentrate attention upon the space between it and another object. An ancillary technique is to close one eye in order to reduce so far as possible distracting distance cues and to try to see the space between the limb and the other object, the 'space left', as if it were already drawn or

¹ M. Von Senden, tr. Peter Heath, Space and Sight (1960) passim.
painted on a single plane perpendicular to the viewer's line of sight. As if, that is to say, it were traced upon a window placed between the draughtsman and the object. The effort of seeing what is before one as a flat pattern of shapes (which, incidentally, should hardly be an effort according to Ruskin, who holds that this is how we *naturally* see things), together with the absence of preconception about the shapes involved which comes from concentrating upon the unfamiliar and nameless 'space left' instead of upon the known limb, is a tremendous aid in the construction of a correct projection of the object at the picture-plane of the drawing. Anyone with practical experience of it will testify to the efficacy of the method, which, when it is first learnt, has something of the force of a revelation. Students often delight in producing an extraordinarily solid-looking drawing of a figure by carefully drawing everything *except* the figure, in terms of 'spaces left', and then applying a touch or two within the figure to bring it up in a perspectival correctness which they could scarcely have matched by concentrating upon the figure *as such* and consciously invoking the rules of perspective.

There is no reason in principle why we should not all master this device to some extent (it is *not* easy) and employ it not only when we are making drawings but when we are looking critically at three-dimensional - and even at two-dimensional - aesthetic objects, so that by habit it becomes the case that we see nameless but
interesting shapes everywhere and almost cease to notice the familiar cow-shapes, cube-shapes and cabbage-shapes. Two points must be made, however. The first has already been touched upon: that this is a sophisticated trick, learnt of necessity after we have learnt to see in the ordinary way and have come to understand the relation a central perspective projection onto a picture plane bears to the objects so represented. We must both learn to see things and learn to 'read' pictures before we can fuse the skills. And secondly, the technique can be misplaced and misused. A device which is helpful to a draughtsman because it helps him to render the appearance of solid objects correctly within a certain pictorial convention is not one which can sensibly be used by his critics in order deliberately to avoid noticing what it is that he has drawn and how well he has done it. The appeal to us to pay attention to what we ordinarily do not notice (for example, the 'spaces left' between obtrusive objects) is often a pointed and effective one in aesthetic discourse; but the demand sometimes heard that we should never do otherwise, that we should not notice what we do notice - the depth of the three-dimensional objects in front of us - is excessively and unjustifiably strict.

I shall anticipate here the arguments of Chapters VI and VII, and simply assert that an innocent eye is not a necessary and sufficient organ for a viewer who would adopt an aesthetic attitude; although to the extent that an eye which is quick to notice unfamiliar
configurations in a familiar context may be regarded as 'innocent', it may well be an asset. A critic who is able to break our habit of seeing things in familiar ways, and to induce us to notice things we might otherwise never have noticed - a critic who can, in Wittgenstein's phrase, relieve our 'aspect-blindnesses' - is likely to be regarded as more aesthetically perceptive than most. It would be a serious mistake, however, to suppose that he is exercising sensibility only when he notices such unfamiliar aspects of things. Noticing is at the heart of aesthetic matters, and noticing something which is thoroughly familiar but which might yet pass unremarked by another viewer may be as much an exercise of sensibility as noticing something altogether unusual or neglected. Aesthetic illuminations are not lights such that, like matches, they can only be struck once.

The two strands of thought, aesthetic disinterestedness deriving from Kant, and the innocent eye, deriving from Berkeley via Ruskin, have been woven together in the present half century with a correlate notion: that of a specific and unique inner occurrent aesthetic response, feeling or emotion. It is my aim to distinguish as clearly as possible between an aesthetic attitude, which is an indispensable key to the theory of appreciation and criticism, and all of these bogus quasi-physiological occurrences which have been alleged to mark off plainly to introspection the aesthetic from all other responses to the perceptible world.
This distinction is by no means respected in the literature. Indeed, so far from achieving respect it often seems not even to have won recognition. Hospers, for example, in the course of making another distinction, misses this one entirely:

Much confusion results from the failure to remember that 'the aesthetic' refers to a kind of attitude rather than the objects towards which this attitude is taken...It is important to remember also that the aesthetic attitude may be co-present with other attitudes, and only occasionally is present exclusively. Rarely does the experience reach such a peak of intensity as to exclude all else from the field of consciousness.¹

In this short passage what is at first clearly designated an attitude mysteriously becomes, in the final sentence, an experience; and moreover an experience which, when it reaches 'a peak of intensity' is by no means to be distinguished from Bell's famous pure aesthetic emotion. The same tendency has already been remarked in connection with a passage from Hunter Mead quoted earlier.

Clive Bell published the classic statement of the theory I wish to refute, in 1914:

The starting point for all systems of aesthetics must be the personal experience of a peculiar emotion. The objects that provoke this emotion we call works of art. All sensitive people agree that there is a peculiar emotion provoked by works of art...This emotion is called the aesthetic emotion; and if we can discover some quality common to all the objects that provoke it, we shall have solved what I take to be the central

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problem of aesthetics. We shall have discovered the essential quality that distinguishes works of art from all other classes of objects.¹

The scandalous circularity of Bell's doctrine as a whole has already been adequately commented upon,² but what he called its 'starting point' was common ground with aestheticians of a quite different tradition and temper.³ Criticism of it must therefore be more radical and more comprehensive in its broad consequences for aesthetic theory than a demonstration that Bell's distinctive solution of 'the central problem' in terms of Significant Form is empirically vacuous, or amounts to mere verbal legislation. The basis of such a criticism is to be found in the insight, due to Wittgenstein, that inner states stand in need of an external criterion.

In order to make quite explicit what theory it is that is under attack, I shall extract from the various versions what seem to be their three necessary features. The aesthetic emotion (or sense, or feeling,

¹ *Art* (1949) pp.6-7

² See, for example, Beryl Lake, 'A study of the Irrefutability of Two Aesthetic Theories' in Elton, ed., *Aesthetics and Language.*

³ For example, R.G. Collingwood, in *Outlines of a Philosophy of Art* (1925) p.7: 'Fundamentally, fine art is the apprehension of beauty...The awareness of beauty is at once the starting point and the culmination, the presupposition and the end of all art'. And (p.11): '...the artist's pleasure is not the pleasure of the voluptuary or the scientist or the man of action, but a specifically aesthetic pleasure'.
or response - writers differ) is evidently held to be an inner state which is:

a) a distinct state, unlike all other inner states

b) an inner state which, when it occurs, announces its presence (and its nature) indubitably to the introspective eye, and

c) an inner state which is logically foundational to aesthetic theory in that aesthetic objects, or works of art (or, in Bell's version, objects with Significant Form) are identifiable only by ultimate appeal to some individual's enjoyment of such an inner state in the presence of a candidate object.

The pragmatic objection to all this, that one's own introspective efforts reveal no such inner state, would simply remain an unresolved empirical issue between oneself and Bell's 'sensitive people', if it were not that the very idea of such a state is inadmissible.

It cannot be a feature of the theory that whatever object arouses or provokes the aesthetic state in Jones must arouse that state in Smith; for such a provision would render the entire theory either philosophically trivial or empirically false. It would be a trivial theory if this invariable agreement of observers were to be secured by stipulation, so that anyone - let us say Smith - who confessed that he was not put into the aesthetic state by an object which moved Jones, would thereby be shown not to be genuinely 'sensitive'; that is, to lack a capacity or faculty of the relevant kind. For the authority of Jones's response is surely open to question. Why should not Smith, who claims to be in an aesthetic state when in the presence
of objects which do not move Jones, be thought to enjoy the true
capacity for entering aesthetic states, and Jones to be the victim of
spurious promptings?

To generalize the point: if there were not paradigm objects from
which, or in the presence of which the use of the phrase 'aesthetic
state' (or 'emotion', or whatever) is learnt, as the name of an
occurrence in the presence of these objects, then that phrase could
not come to have a function in our public language - or rather, it
could not come to have the function it is alleged to have, as the
name of an inner state the occurrence of which is to serve as criterial
of the presence of an appropriate object. And to admit that
aesthetic objects have logical primacy or priority is contrary to the
hypothesis actually advanced.

If, on the other hand, the theory is genuinely empirical and not
tautologous by covert stipulation, then it is quite certainly false.
As a matter of fact, those individuals who lay claim to the enjoyment
of occasional aesthetic states differ sharply and argumentatively over
which objects are properly provocative of them.

In spite of this, it is sometimes maintained that the theory
requires only a little modification to stand up. There is what might
be called a strong and a weak caveat which tend to be advanced by
theorists who concede the force of the argument above. The strong
caveat might be put in this way:
Perhaps, in spite of what has been said, it might be true as a matter of empirical fact that we are able to introspect a distinctive aesthetic state the occurrence of which we should be entitled to regard as criterial of our having adopted an aesthetic attitude. Such an attitude might be adopted towards any object, natural or artificial, and any remarks made under what one might call its patronage or auspices would necessarily be aesthetic remarks.

The shift embodied in this suggestion - which is in the end no more than an evasion of the difficulty - is from the treatment of inner states as criterial of the presence of a certain kind of object, to these states as criterial of a certain kind of attitude. And of course a precisely parallel argument will go: if the attitude is the public phenomenon then it is this which is logically prior in that the correct use of the phrase 'aesthetic state' will be regulated by paradigmatic aesthetic attitudes. It is illuminating, however, to consider the case a little differently.

Suppose I remark that the layout of a newspaper at which I casually glance (and let us imagine it to be printed in a language I do not understand) is marred by the use of too many different weights, sizes and styles of type; and that introspection reveals to me no inner emotions or states which did not seem to be present both before and after giving brief attention to the page. It is a matter of habit with me to notice such things and to make such remarks, just as it is a habit of the motorist to notice traffic signs without any - necessary - emotion. Now upon the theory, ought it to be said that:
i. My attitude to the page, expressed in the remarks I made, is not an aesthetic attitude? Or

ii. Since I make an exemplary prima facie aesthetic remark my attitude must have been, however briefly, an aesthetic one. It therefore follows that I must have experienced an aesthetic emotion, although perhaps so fleetingly and at so low a pitch of intensity that I was not able to introspect it?

It is evident that neither of these expedients will serve the proposer of the strong caveat. For if he maintains that to notice and to remark upon the layout of a visual design in such a way and in such terms as I did is not to adopt an aesthetic attitude, then he will find himself legislating against the main stream - perhaps one should say the overwhelming torrent - of language. 'Your aesthetic attitude to these things', the mogul says, 'doesn't interest me. I know what sells newspapers'. Whether he is right or wrong, in the long or in the short run, about taste and demand is not to the point: the point is that he is perfectly clear about what is the ordinary and proper use of the phrase 'aesthetic attitude'. Alternatively, the claim that I must have been in an aesthetic state whether I knew it or not, is contrary to the hypothesis, for it amounts to an admission that the attitude (or remark) is a sufficient condition for the state, and not vice-versa.

But perhaps there is a weaker thesis which is defensible? Try:

There is a peculiar emotion, or inner state, which might as well be called the aesthetic emotion, which some people sometimes detect introspectively whenever they adopt paradigmatically aesthetic attitudes to paradigmatic aesthetic objects (let us say, when they attend
sympathetically, in an appropriate setting and circumstances, to the music of Bach, the poems of Donne, or the sculpture of Marini). This emotion is such that, as a matter of fact, its presence is felt from time to time upon unexpected, unpropitious, unparadigmatic or experimental occasions; and whenever this occurs to such a person he is entitled to certainty that he has located an aesthetic object and adopted an aesthetic attitude to it - even if the normal outward or public signs that this is the case are lacking.

This thesis is too weak to be worth the trouble of assault. The capacity for aesthetic states or emotions is not held to be universally enjoyed, and even if it is regarded as a common asset it is not held to be the necessary foundation of aesthetic theory, since it is not denied that someone without benefit of such states might adopt aesthetic attitudes and make acceptable aesthetic remarks. If this were denied, then we should be back with an indefensibly strong form of the original thesis. The last resort of the aesthetic emotion theorist, then, appears to be something like this:

Sometimes, some people enjoy a special kind of feeling or emotion, which we might as well call the aesthetic emotion, which they detect introspectively as the accompaniment of what they recognize - by other and ordinary means - to be the adoption of an aesthetic attitude to an appropriate object. They may even be able to trust it to some extent as a guide or indicator or cue to what is afoot, although it does not give them guarantees and they must learn the proper use of such expressions as 'aesthetic attitude', 'aesthetic remark' and 'aesthetic object' in the ordinary way, from outward signs, or public criteria.

Well, perhaps there are such people. It is not easy to imagine what it would be like to be one of them. Would it be as if one felt,
say, a surge of gaiety or a twinge of toothache every time one noticed that a hat was jaunty, a cat sleek or a parrot gaudy?

Clearly, the doctrine of inner aesthetic states will not solve the problems it was invented to solve. We must look for the criteria of aesthetic objects, attitudes and situations in the public arena, not in the private world of inner voices whispering authoritatively into an introspective ear.

It is not, as Mead claims, 'axiomatic' that the aesthetic attitude is one which involves the adoption of a detached, disinterested and impersonal standpoint; although these are certainly familiar - if unclear - ideas around which Western aesthetic thinking has revolved since the eighteenth century. Or (not to argue about a word) if it is an axiom it is not one such as those of geometry or logic which we can grasp firmly and apply confidently. It is more like a wise saw of an almost platitudinous character which roughly marks, one might say, the centre of the concept of an aesthetic attitude. It is neither precise enough nor powerful enough to help solve those problems - typically, demarcation problems - which most puzzle aestheticians. In illustration of the point, consider the following passage from the writings of a politically committed critic who is less doctrinaire about what makes for aesthetic excellence than many writers who confess to no ideological position at all.

Concerning the work of a small group of young painters:
...they reject all finesse or elegance of method. It is as if they were beginning again with only a basic vocabulary, or as if they were deliberately painting with their left hands because their right hands had only acquired the skill to perform specious tricks. Their paintings are difficult to enjoy, the colour is usually turgid, the paint coarse, the tonal contrasts slight, the subject vague. But at the same time their seriousness of purpose is obvious, and their austerity, in a sense, heroic...clearly they comment on a world in which there is air to breath, in which forms occupy space and so can be solid obstacles, in which men can live three dimensionally...

Has Berger here adopted an aesthetic attitude to the work under review, or a moral attitude? Are his 'seriousness of purpose' and (heroic) austerity moral remarks, or are they aesthetic remarks? It is just such questions as this, the really interesting questions about actual art-appreciative and critical practice, which are not settled by appeal to the criteria of disinterestedness, detachment or impersonality. There are, after all, comparably imprecise notions of moral disinterestedness and detachment which we are at a loss to distinguish from the aesthetic without falling back helplessly upon the hollow assurance that the one is moral, the other aesthetic. Here the doctrine of the inner state, of the indubitable deliverances of introspection, was evidently supposed to be at its most attractive: It would only be necessary to look or to listen inwardly and one would

1 John Berger, an exhibition review in The New Statesman, 28 February 1959.
simply know whether the feature to which attention is paid is an aesthetic or a moral feature.

It is not the purpose of this inquiry to explore territory adjacent to the aesthetic - or trespass in ethics or sociology or politics - but it nevertheless strongly suggested that the boundaries between the subject matter of these disciplines are fenced by agreement between the leaseholders of neighbouring properties; they are not dispensations of nature. If this is indeed the case then it is possible to give an account of the way in which demarcation problems - such as that implicit in Berger's remarks - arise, which will dispel some of the intellectual distress felt by theorists of art criticism.

Some aesthetic remarks are made in terms of such a paradigmatic character ('graceful', 'delicate', 'dainty', etc.), and they are made in such exemplary aesthetic situations, that we come to believe what is almost true of them - that they could not conceivably be other than aesthetic terms whose point and occasion of use is invariably the utterance of aesthetic remarks. And similarly with moral remarks: they occur in exemplary forms and situations. Professional art critics write in publications devoted to the criticism of the arts, about works of art exhibited in art galleries, such phrases as '...a subtle counterpoint of forms...'. And in a similar way moral critics (perhaps there are no strictly professional moral critics) write or say of those who defraud widows and orphans that their acts are
'…depraved, corrupt, wicked…'. In both cases the proper characterization of the remark and of the attitude that prompted it is decided by reference to the whole complex of factors and circumstances which constitute the total context of utterance. Some remarks ('dainty', 'wicked', etc.) are so redolent of their standard origins and use that they will survive removal from any distinctive context and yet retain a strong generic flavour. Others again are less distinctive; and many forms of words are so neutral that if they are not presented in context we are unable to classify them, even tentatively, in one way rather than in another.

The demarcation problems which are least tractable are those which arise in consequence of a remark which belongs most naturally in, say, a moral context, occurring in an aesthetic context - and no doubt vice-versa, although to insist upon this would perhaps be to trespass. Our difficulty arises as a dilemma, or a conflict of inclination: on the one hand we are disposed to treat a moral-sounding remark as a moral remark because it sounds moral - that is to say, it is a remark which is most commonly made in moral contexts - and on the other hand to treat it as aesthetic because it is made within a clear de facto aesthetic situation, and occurrence in such a situation is one of our strongest reasons for treating an utterance as aesthetic.

And of course all this is true, if it is true at all, not only of the relation between the aesthetic and the moral, but also of the
prudential, the economic, and so on. Whatever distinct domain or region of human action or interest gives rise to characteristic linguistic forms and formulas will open up the possibility of apparently displaced material finding itself swallowed into an alien system which is not invariably or easily able to digest it. Our difficulty with John Berger's criticism is, I suggest, of this kind. On the one hand we are inclined to consider that such phrases as '...their seriousness of purpose is obvious, and their austerity, in a sense, heroic...' are necessarily moral remarks because they very plainly are just such remarks as would be made most naturally by persons intent upon passing moral judgment. But against this we are obliged to take into account that the words are used by a professional art critic, writing in a regular column of art criticism about works of art exhibited in an art gallery, for the purpose of drawing attention to features which the critic (at least) believes to be of aesthetic relevance.

It is perhaps worth special emphasis at this point, in order to avoid misunderstanding, that I am not here suggesting that sometimes, under unusual circumstances or in the light of unusual considerations, what are really moral considerations may be regarded as aesthetic considerations, but - quite differently - that what one might very easily mistake for moral considerations (because of their prima facie form) may actually be aesthetic considerations. Further, I wish to suggest that to the
extent that aesthetic theorists have attempted to bring out strict logical principles in the light of which such dilemmas may always be resolved, such enterprises have been either legislative or ineffective.

Decision problems involving the precise scope of the aesthetic in relation to the moral, economic, etc., are, in any historical context, amenable to sociological forms of enquiry. Thus we may say that for a Soviet critic, detecting and bringing out the ideological content of works of art is an exercise of aesthetic sensibility; for a Renaissance critic such as Vasari, noticing the degree of lifelikeness in a painting is a connoisseurs' characteristic concern ('Mona Lisa', he said, '...has even been esteemed a wonderful work, since life itself could exhibit no other appearance'); and for a society which is neither contemporary nor Western, such as that of ancient Polynesia or Peru, the range of the aesthetic is perhaps better elucidated by the historian of ideas than by the contemporary aesthetic theorist.

It is when the decision as to whether some consideration is or is not aesthetic is not yet made, at what one might call the growing point of cultural history, that philosophical aesthetics seems to have the positive role of arbitration in the light of principles which it is widely thought to be within the philosopher's special

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competence to discern in the flux of things and to make explicit to the unphilosophical critic. But such principles are liable to turn out, upon inspection, to be prescriptions or exhortations. Their apparatus of rational argument and of internal consistency give them the appearance of being - as indeed they surely often are - more or less sensible recommendations, but never of being the outcome of a conclusive chain of reasoning from factual or a priori premises which nobody would wish to dispute to conclusions which no rational person could escape. Sometimes, too, the philosophical 'argument' pretends to no greater validity than is given it by an explicit appeal to facts of experience which are at best uncertain and at worst quite certainly false. Thus, for example, Harold Osborne:

Whether or not a work of art was made for any purpose other than to be a work of art, whether it in fact serves any other purpose and, if it does, whether it serves that purpose efficiently or inefficiently, is completely irrelevant to its excellence as a work of art. The purpose of the artist is, therefore, an irrelevant consideration in judging works of art, for a great number of excellent works of art have been produced incidentally by artists who had other objects in mind - such as earning a living, arousing a sense of indignation at social inequalities, making people laugh, copying as exactly as possible a selected piece of nature, and so on. In saying that these utility-purposes are irrelevant to the excellence of works of art I am not enunciating a dogma of my own but making a generalisation from the facts of critical judgment everywhere.¹

¹ Aesthetics and Criticism (1955) p.80, footnote.
It is, I think, unnecessary to deploy the legion of counter-examples to defeat the claim that 'the facts of critical judgment everywhere' support Osborne's view. Nor, of course, is it a dogma of his own: the alternatives he offers are not logically exhaustive. His suggestion is, indeed, quite a familiar one; what is astonishing is that any serious attempt should be made to pass it off as a universally accepted one. Thus, to remind ourselves that Leonardo's work was judged aesthetically excellent '...since life itself would exhibit no other appearance'; that Goya's or Daumier's work has been judged excellent for the sharpness of its satirical edge; that Chaplin was considered a substantial artist precisely because he made us laugh so much.—all this is of no avail against the ultimate exclusion of such considerations by fiat. Once the stipulative definition of the range of aesthetic considerations is forced out of hiding we can see that what is proposed is dogma, for all the disarming appeal to alleged facts of experience.

A stronger example, in that the argument is more philosophical in character and the prescription more finely wrought into the argument and therefore less evidently arbitrary, is J.A. Passmore's:

It is...impossible to define 'the aesthetic use of "good"' as 'the use of "good" in which it is applied to works of art', for we can rightly describe a work as 'good' without ascribing aesthetic characters to it. The solution, I think, is that although there are not 'aesthetic properties' common to all good works of art, there is what we may call an aesthetic approach to works of art, just as there is a scientific way of considering a thing, without it being the case that things have
scientific characters; or again, there are not technical properties but there is a technical approach. The technical approach raises the question: 'how was this work put together?'; the historical approach: 'when was it done, influenced by what?'; the biographical approach: 'what does it amount to, as an event in its creator's life?'; the aesthetic approach: 'how does this work hang together?'. But 'hanging together' - or, to use more genteel expressions, coherence, harmony, integrity, form - is not a special aesthetic property, recognizably the same in various works of art; it is more like a category than a property, suggesting the kinds of questions which are to be asked rather than the sort of property that is to be looked for.¹

To say that the aesthetic attitude or approach consists in an observer's disposition to ask and to seek answers to certain loosely specifiable kinds of question is a perfectly acceptable descriptive move; but prescription, or persuasive definition, is woven into the analysis just where the need to face the problem 'which kinds of question?' begins to be felt. The aesthetic approach, Passmore says, is responsive to questions about '...coherence, harmony, integrity, form'. And this is surely true - but is the aesthetic approach not concerned with any other kind of question? And might not these questions (of coherence, etc.) be asked from another approach? Is it impossible that questions about coherence should ever be technical or that questions about integrity should ever be moral questions? The point is not argued, and indeed it would be very difficult to argue. It is, in the end, a matter of doctrine that, for example:

...the Aristotelian question (understood as Aristotle understood it) - has this work a beginning, a middle, and an end? - cannot be settled by any mechanical method; and this, the formal problem, is, I should say, an aesthetic question.¹

It is true that the critics of the present half century have been much concerned with formal questions - although it must be pointed out that they have not found themselves in conspicuous agreement about what are and what are not formal questions - but again, as with Osborne's claims about the function of works of art, it is not apodictic but a matter of exhortation that the scope of the aesthetic should be determined in the recommended way. Moreover, the clear distinction, upon which Passmore's criterion turns, between the technical, the aesthetic, the biographical, and so on, is not one which we are in fact able to discern at all confidently in the present state of conceptual confusion about these matters. Passmore takes the question 'Is this a sonnet?' to be a mere technical question;² while Beardsley - for example - regards the analogous 'Is this a rondo?' as a formal question and a paradigm of formal questions.³ Neither of these eminent writers can lightly be dismissed as indulging an idiosyncratic usage, and the conclusion is inescapable

¹ Ibid., p.41.
² Ibid., p.41.
³ Aesthetics, p.166: 'Most critics, I think, would agree about the words "rondo" and "gay"; the former refers to form, the latter does not'.
that the concept of form in the arts is not one which can safely be used as a logical lever until it has itself been subjected to a good deal of analysis.

It seems - not to undertake such an analysis here - that there certainly are some questions about the objects of aesthetic attention which might, or indeed which must, be called formal questions: but whoever would show that these or any other distinctive set of questions is in some unmistakably natural way marked out as the set of aesthetic questions, will find that he must either frankly resort to persuasion, or else he must conceal tautology - generating definitions somewhere up the sleeve of the argument. Neither of these expedients seems quite strictly philosophical in the modern sense of the word, although the former is certainly the proper recourse of a philosopher who wishes not merely to see how matters stand but to tidy or improve their stance.

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Probably the best way to illustrate - not to define - the scope of the aesthetic is in terms of paradigm remarks and situations. Boundary disputes will then be seen to arise where a feature of the total situation is unparadigmatic, or even contra-paradigmatic, while
the remaining features are unproblematical. The appropriate ways of arguing such boundary problems will vary from instance to instance, and in some cases may be amenable to nothing short of legislation; although the names of the de facto arbiters may not emerge until matters have receded into historical perspective. Certainly it would be absurd to think of them in general as appointed, 1 although some may be self-appointed. It is, incidentally, curious that the phrase 'arbiter of taste' should so seldom be met in aesthetic writings - as if any element of the arbitrary in intellectual and cultural matters were an unfortunate impropriety quite beneath a stern theorist's notice.

Let us consider, then, a paradigmatic aesthetic situation:

Suppose that the remark 'The stone is handled with great sensitivity to its natural qualities' is made by a professional art critic about an acknowledged work of sculpture which is exhibited in an art gallery. Let us further suppose that appropriate investigation has disclosed no reason whatever to think that the critic has any covert or illicit purpose in making this remark: on the contrary, let us imagine that we have every reason to believe that he wishes only to draw our attention to an aesthetic feature of the object before him which gives him, and may give us, purely

1 But perhaps not, after all, so absurd. What is the function of a national Ministry of Culture?
aesthetic pleasure or satisfaction.

If this is not an aesthetic situation, then we would scarcely know what is. If the critic has not adopted an aesthetic attitude to the sculpture, exercised his powers of aesthetic discrimination and made an aesthetic remark, then we do not know how to use some or all of these expressions, for they were surely devised to characterize the aspects of just such a situation as this.

And now let us imagine the main elements of this situation to be altered in the following ways - in each case supposing the bulk of the considerations to retain their original character.

1. Suppose that the critic does not remark that the material is handled with great sensitivity to its natural qualities (which perhaps nobody would hold to be other than an aesthetic remark) but: 'This work brings out the dignity and essential humanity of the bank-manager (or steel-worker, or whatever)'. Is this an aesthetic remark? Could only a critic who was sensitive to the aesthetic features of things have made it? The aesthetician cannot, as such, advance arguments which would conclusively settle such a question - assuming it still to be an open question in our society. In some societies, not utterly unlike our own, such a remark will be taken to be at least as evidently aesthetic as the one at the head of this paragraph. As an informed and articulate person the aesthetic theorist is in a position to contribute to the discussion, and as a philosopher he might contribute valuably to it, by speaking more
clearly, consistently, and with less prejudice than most. It is
nevertheless, at root, an ideological question which only a firmly
legislative aesthetic theory could settle out of hand.

2. Let us suppose that the remark is not made about a work of
patently human origin, but about a natural formation exhibited as an
object trouvé.

It would certainly be a curious, although perhaps not an utterly
incoherent locution to say that material is handled sensitively by
natural forces. It is, indeed, almost necessarily true, since the
notion of sensitivity to the natural properties of a medium - stone,
for example - is derived from the appearance of natural formations;
the softer parts eroded, the harder parts prominent and worn smooth, and
so on. To the extent that it is acceptable to anthropomorphize nature
at all it is proper to do so in aesthetic contexts. Of course, it may
be denied that such ways of speaking are ever acceptable; in which
case ordinary language is stripped of one of its familiar resources.
We shall be required not to say 'Time has been kind to her...' or 'If
only it would decide whether or not it will rain...'. But whatever
one's decision here, it is evident that the anthropomorphic question
only arises in connection with genetic remarks - that is to say,
remarks which concern in some way the origins or the originator of an
object. There are many remarks which do not raise this issue and which
plainly ascribe aesthetic features to natural objects and phenomena:
'A delicate tracery of shadow cast by the trees', for example.
It would in general be a mistake to regard *objets trouvés* straightforwardly as parodies, say, of deliberate works of art, because of the element of intention or deliberation implicit in such notions as 'parody', 'copy' or 'satire'. But it would not necessarily be a mistake to speak * elliptically * of such an object as a parody or a satire, since it may well have been the purpose of the finder or the exhibitor to give it just this role. Indeed, it is not impossible for a critic to give an object such a role independently of *anyone's* intentions, by his very utterance, provided only that the object is adapted to it, that the role fits, and is not laid upon an inappropriate bearer. The ellipsis consists in the omission of explicit reference to the fact that the object is seen as having a function in a context, and not as a pure, 'meaningless' spectacle.

3. Let us suppose that the original remark is made in the original context, but by a passing carpenter and not by a professional art critic.

It would, I think, be regarded as an interesting and perhaps unusual incident, but not as such necessarily destructive of the aesthetic character of the remark, since this is stamped so firmly on its face. Nevertheless the qualifications of the speaker may affect the decision if the issue is up for debate, and this will especially tend to be the case where the remark itself lacks *prima facie* character. If the critic remarks 'How very massive it looks' he will probably be taken to have uttered an aesthetic remark, whereas a
passing carpenter might be supposed to be making audible non-aesthetic calculations about the strength of the required plinth.

4. The entire incident takes place not in an art gallery, but on a rubbish tip.

There is nowadays a fairly general acceptance, amongst educated people, of the view that no place is much holier than another from the aesthetic point of view. Nevertheless, some remarks about some objects seen on rubbish tips will not naturally be regarded as aesthetic remarks while the same form of words used about a sculpture in a gallery may be so taken. 'Notice how quickly it is rusting away', for example.¹

5. Let us suppose that the critic is not disinterested - in the most commonplace sense of the word. We may go so far as to imagine that he is the author of the work in question, and is anxious to sell it.

Can we say that a venal motive automatically disqualifies putative aesthetic remarks made in its interest? Evidently not, for it is surely a consideration of importance whether or not the material is handled with great sensitivity, quite irrespective of the critic's motive in drawing attention to this feature of it. But suppose that the remark had been less specific, and more patent a verdict: 'That

¹ Compare the criticism of auto-destructive art, regarded as a quasi-performance, discussed in Ch.II.
sculpture is good', for example. Should we consider that the critic's authorship and financial interest denatured the remark? There is evidently no general answer to this question; it must be argued out case by case.

6. Suppose that the remark was not in fact made in order to draw the attention of an audience to an aesthetic feature, or in consequence of any exercise of aesthetic sensibility, but for some other reason altogether.

This is an implausible variant of the paradigm case as outlined here, but we can imagine more appropriate circumstances. Suppose that we are invited to inspect a vegetable marrow, by a man who mistakenly supposes that we know him to be a singleminded plant pathologist, in these terms: 'Notice the interesting pattern of purple discolouration...'. We shall no doubt discover, if we look into the matter, that he did not intend an aesthetic remark, but shall we be absolutely confident that he has not made one? It is, of course, one of the recommendations of this thesis that aesthetic remarks be regarded, amongst other things, as remarks the making of which exercises a characteristic kind of sensitivity to the world; but a qualification must be introduced at this point.

It is implicit, if not fully explicit, in all that has already been said, that a remark is not 'aesthetic' in virtue of its form but in virtue of its special role or function in human intercourse. Remarks are normally given that function, deliberately, by their
authors; and it has been argued that a special sensitivity is a necessary qualification for whoever would launch remarks with just that role, regularly and successfully. It does not follow that a remark otherwise aimed might not misfire in relation to its intended function and yet prove serviceable in a role not anticipated by its author. Just as we may drive screws with a chisel (to the craftsman's disgust) so we might find a - pathologically - interesting pattern of discolouration aesthetically remarkable.

It would be more precise, although more pedantic, to refuse to handle the question 'Is this an aesthetic remark?' altogether; and to discuss only one or other of the family of questions: 'Was this remark intended by its author to have an aesthetic role?'; 'Was it taken by its audience to have an aesthetic role?'; and 'does it really fit its designed or its accepted role?'. An affirmative answer to the first does not entail affirmative answers to the remaining questions, although it will tend strongly in that direction, and especially will it do so in a culturally homogeneous society.

The claim, then, that aesthetic remarks exercise sensibility in the making, must be regarded rather as a slogan than otherwise, and exceptions admitted. Only a speaker with aesthetic sensibility will be capable of making aesthetic remarks deliberately, although anyone might make them accidentally - as jokes are sometimes made accidentally although only a speaker with an eye for the comic will make good jokes, deliberately, often.
All the foregoing considerations in relation to the paradigm case and its peripheral uncertainties, although they are very general and by no means comprehensive, surely indicate clearly enough what kind of domain is the aesthetic; and they show the absurdity of supposing that a definitive survey might be made which would culminate in formulas apt to the solution of every question.

The criticism of the arts - which I have taken to be at least a substantial part although not quite the entirety of the subject matter of aesthetics - is something sui generis. We discover what kind of thing it is, what are its characteristic problems, disagreements, and modes of argument, by investigating it so to speak in situ, in its social and cultural context. We cannot lay down in advance of investigation the precise conditions and considerations which will determine whether or not given instances of speech or behaviour are properly to be called 'aesthetic'. There is little scope even for convincing empirical generalisation, and none for a priorism. It may be impossible, upon occasion, to say whether a given remark is properly speaking aesthetic, economic, moral or whatever. This impossibility does not, of course, amount to a confession of philosophical failure, but, on the contrary, to a claim of modest success: we have discovered - roughly - how things are.

In Urmson's words, '...moral, aesthetic and economic satisfactions seem neither to be logically disconnected nor to be true species of a
We can ask whether a satisfaction is aesthetic or moral or economic, as we can ask whether something is round or square or triangular; and we can be simultaneously satisfied by a single object aesthetically, morally and economically - but nothing can be simultaneously round, square and triangular. He urges that:

If we find the criterion for distinguishing aesthetic from kindred reactions in the nature of the explanation of the reaction we can readily account for this logical situation. To say that a satisfaction is wholly aesthetic, for example, will be to say that the explanation or grounds of the satisfaction are wholly of one sort, which will necessitate that the satisfaction cannot rest also on moral grounds; on the other hand there is clearly nothing to prevent our satisfaction from being multiply-grounded and thus simultaneously aesthetic and moral, aesthetic and economic, and so on.

I should prefer to say, and perhaps Urmson would not disagree, that aesthetic and other attitudes and situations are more and less evidently of a paradigmatic character, and that when they are less so then the 'satisfactions' enjoyed and the remarks uttered may be of uncertain status. And, on the other hand, in paradigm aesthetic situations remarks which belong, prima facie, to other situations may be sheer solecisms, or they may be deliberate moves in an attempt to change the game - to divert the course of cultural and intellectual history. Harold Rosenberg, the American critic and apostle of

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2 Ibid.
abstract expressionism, embraces the overtly historicist view that:

Art is constantly making itself; its definition is in the future. Criticism cannot therefore be a single developing theory; it must be partisan and polemical in order to join art in asserting what it is to become.¹

And whether deliberate or not, whether initially gravely solecistic or not, new moves do change the game. If functional considerations and aesthetic considerations had been set for ever apart in adamantine cultural forms we would not have had the functional aesthetic which was midwife to the spare elegance of our best urban scenery. No doubt the first critic to remark, sensitively, 'How ugly are those unnecessary towers at the ends of the bridge!' seemed to his contemporaries not to have hold of the aesthetic end of the stick. And certainly Boccioni went too far when he wrote 'In art, everything is conventional. The truths of yesterday are the downright lies of today';² but his mistake was less fundamental, if more superficially extravagant, than that of the iron theorist who holds that if the aesthetic attitudes and situations of today are unlike those of yesterday, one or both of them must not be aesthetic.

¹ The Tradition of the New (1962) p.54.
² Umberto Boccioni, Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting, (1910).
CHAPTER V

VERDICTS

There are certain presuppositions of traditional aesthetics which are so pervasive as to be effectively invisible. That the aesthetic theorist is primarily, or at any rate very largely concerned to explicate the notion of a unique and distinctive entity, property or relation called 'aesthetic value' is generally taken for granted; and that the investigation of the meaning and proper use of the word 'good' is peculiarly and intimately related to this task is - traditionally - beyond question. It does not seem to be much remarked in the literature, except with something like the condescension or irritation of professional for tradesman, that critics of the arts, commentators upon natural beauty and those who exercise aesthetic sensibility in whatever context, make only moderately frequent use of the word 'good'; and that the class of remarks to which one might confidently tag '...and that is a value judgment' is neither co-extensive with the class of remarks which make use of the word 'good', nor indeed is it conspicuously marked in any other way.

In order to reduce the complex lights and shades of actual critical discourse to the stylised formal contrasts of evaluation - description or judgment - interpretation, it is usual to concentrate
attention massively, if not always quite exclusively, upon a supposed distinction between the use of the word 'good' and that of allegedly neutral or purely descriptive terms. One of two assumptions or presuppositions is built into this procedure. It is taken for granted either:

i) that the use of non-neutral terms other than 'good' is no concern of the aesthetician, to which Law one might respond, classically: 'Why not?' or

ii) that the meaning and use of non-neutral term other than 'good' is always in principle reducible to or equivalent to or logically identical but better exemplified by the use of 'good'.

The expression 'non-neutral' as used here already concedes far too much to the champion of the second, more prepossessing assumption. He is in any event unlikely to try an analysis of such terms as 'marvellous' or 'consummate' with a view to demonstrating their equivalence or reducibility to 'good' absolutely; all that he will seek to accomplish is a demonstration of equivalence in a certain respect. He will nominate that respect somewhat as follows: 'We are interested', he will say, 'in the aesthetic excellence (or '...in the degree of aesthetic excellence') which is attributed to an object by the use of a non-neutral or value term. It may be the case that some non-neutral terms have multiple functions or connotations, but to the extent that any one of them has this function it is assimilable to the (aesthetic) use of "good", which differs from those other terms or expressions in
common use only in what one might call its purity, or the absence of adulteration with foreign purposes.'

This story is plausible, but it should not be overlooked that the demonstration of reducibility or equivalence remains to be done. It is not self-evident that 'marvellous' in the mouth of a critic attributes (perhaps amongst other things) some measure of excellence of precisely the same kind as does 'good'. Indeed - and this is why 'non-neutral' is a dangerously loaded expression - what is at issue here is whether there is or is not a simple binary classification such that whatever is properly spoken of in (aesthetically) non-neutral terms has, of necessity, a positive and homogeneous character describable simply as that of being (to some degree) aesthetically valuable. Or, to put the matter in terms of a mathematical analogy; what is in question is whether aesthetic excellence is a linear or a multi-dimensional concept. On a basis of this analogy the assumption that aesthetic value is in principle exhaustively discussable in terms of the meaning and use of the word 'good' is equivalent to the assumption that aesthetic value is one-dimensional; that all the aesthetic values, or degrees of aesthetic value, which are properly attributable to any object must lie on a linear scale and not in a plane, or in a volume, or indeed in a logical space of some number of dimensions only determinable by investigation.

As well as the tacit assumption of linearity in the aesthetic dimension there is, connectedly, a general assumption that the
proper use of 'good' is always directed to one end and always obviously and consistently so directed. Philosophers who reject the notion that goodness is an intrinsic property of things in favour of the view that 'good' is a word which commends or recommends, are prone to suppose that consistency in use is determined by reference to the natural properties of the object of which 'good' is used, and not by the nature of the activity of commending or recommending itself. Thus Hare, in a brief excursion into aesthetics, writes:

Now since it is the purpose of the word 'good' and other value-words to be used for teaching standards, their logic is in accord with this purpose... The reason why I cannot apply the word 'good' to one picture, if I refuse to apply it to another picture which I agree to be in all other respects exactly similar, is that by doing this I should be defeating the purpose for which the word is designed. I should be commending one object, and so purporting to teach my hearers one standard, while in the same breath refusing to commend a similar object, and so undoing the lesson just imparted. By seeking to impart two inconsistent standards, I should be imparting no standard at all. The effect of such an utterance is similar to that of a contradiction; for in a contradiction, I say two inconsistent things, and the effect is that the hearer will not know what I am trying to say.¹

¹ R.M. Hare, The Language of Morals (1952) p.134. Hare makes the same point over again, at greater length, in Freedom and Reason (1963) pp.139 et seq., discussing in particular the example of two lithographic prints. He is, consistently, committed to the doctrine that two 'qualitatively similar' works of art must be the same work of art. But Cf. H.S. Eveling’s dismissal of a similar claim made by Ruby Meager (PAS, LIX (1958-59) pp.57-58) in Eveling, 'Composition and Criticism', PAS, LIX (1958-59) p.222: 'Miss Ruby Meager has argued that if two persons wrote down a poem
Of course, a great deal hangs on Hare's phrase '...in all other respects exactly similar'. If he means absolutely all other respects, including mode and time of origin, material and historical context and so on, then he earns his conclusion at the cost of losing that commonsense distinction between qualitative and numerical identity which seems crucial to the point he is trying to establish. In fact he does not appear to have in mind a fully literal interpretation of 'all other respects' but only that ordinary understanding of the phrase in which a perfect facsimile of a painting would be said to resemble the painting 'in all respects'. Without the aid of some individuating clue, we might reasonably suppose, no connoisseur could distinguish between a painting and a perfect facsimile. If this is indeed Hare's meaning, then it is far from obvious that a critic is not entitled to say, pointing to the picture on the museum wall: 'This is good in that it is the first painting to break with the exhausted tradition of such-and-such a style or period', and, pointing consisting of the same words we should have to say that they had written the same poem. I do not see that we have to say this at all. If such a situation did arise then I am more inclined to say that it would not be at all clear how we should want to describe the situation. The difficulty here is that there is not one criterion of identity and difference involved in the invinduation of poems but that one individuating feature is that they are written by particular persons. The difficulty about the situation Miss Meager envisages is that there is a clash of criteria, one feature inclining us to say that it is one poem, the other, in virtue of the fact that it only becomes possible to make sense of poetry on the presumption of a particular author, inclining us to suppose that we ought to speak of two poems'.
to a very exact copy on a student's easel: 'This painting, which I confess I might easily mistake for the other under certain circumstances (if they were shuffled, for example) differs just in that, being a copy, it does not break with any tradition and is not good in that particular respect.

Several responses are possible here. It might be maintained that critical remarks which evidently have tokens as their subject matter and not types are improper or invalid. Such a view could then be developed in two ways: either it might be argued that critical remarks which are not about the type ('the picture' as contrasted with 'this - physical - painting') are necessarily not aesthetic remarks at all; or alternatively that what is not about the type, although it may be an aesthetic remark of some kind, is not directed to or at the work of art as such.

The first of these suggestions is not worth powder and shot, but the subtler alternative requires answer, which may be made in this way. It is true that there are some things we can properly say about a type as contrasted with tokens of it, and some things we cannot properly say about the type but only about individual tokens. For example, we may say of the type Mona Lisa that it has an enigmatic smile - or, not to provoke irrelevant disagreement - that it is a portrait; but we may not say of the type that it recently travelled to America under heavy guard. On the other hand it is permissible to say of one particular, quite unique token of the
type - the one that Leonardo made - both that it is a portrait and that it visited America. We may say, too, of this token (as perhaps of a number of others) that its varnishes have changed and darkened with time; but we cannot say any such thing of the type. Of course, one of the problems of the notion of a *Mona Lisa* type is that we are a little uncertain what colour we ought to regard it as being - that of the original token of c.1500 or of the same token c.1960. If the former, then we must tolerate what is, to say the least, an odd suggestion: that we treat the object now in the Louvre as only a poorish token, presentation, or version of the picture *Mona Lisa*.

The root of the matter seems to be that ordinary language - by which is meant the ordinary language of specialists, critics, historians, museum-keepers, artists, exporters and insurance companies as well as that of the common man - speaks equivocally from the point of view of the type/token distinction in the plastic arts. We have no warrant from ordinary language to treat the *Mona Lisa* considered 'as such' as being abundantly obviously a type and not a -that is, one particular - token. There is ample warrant for regarding other tokens of the same type as disqualified from consideration for the status of being the work of art 'as such', and in the case of those arts which exhibit no prime instances or privileged tokens it is quite natural to regard the type as being the work of art 'as such'. Nobody supposes that the Iliad, as such
is in his library, but the government of France certainly supposes
the *Mona Lisa*, as such, to be in its custody.

Aestheticians, then, may be tempted to generalize from some
arts (or even perhaps from most arts) to all arts, and thereby to
make mistakes; and they may be tempted to convert their mistakes
into logically consistent although not very illuminating moves by
means of open or concealed legislation. If it is *ruled* that no
token is ever to be considered to be the work of art as such, not
even those hallowed tokens in the Louvre, then it is so ruled. But
even this insight does not bring us to the end of the matter: there
remains the consideration that each and every token, and not merely,
in appropriate cases, the privileged tokens, may be the subject of
aesthetic appraisal, and that such appraisal may properly be said
to be of *some* work of art or aesthetic object as such. It is true
that if a critic observes, tritely, that a student's copy of, let us
say, Malevich's *White on White* (1919) is not an original painting -
in the honorific sense of 'original' - he is not speaking of *White
on White* as such, which, of course, *is* an (honorifically) original
painting, or at least is widely regarded by contemporary critics as
an (honorifically) original painting. He is speaking of the
student's copy as such, and the student's copy is not, as such, the
work called *White on White* in either the type or the privileged
token sense. Nevertheless it is an aesthetic object; and as an
aesthetic object it is the proper subject of aesthetic attention and
remark: what is at issue is whether such a remark as 'It is not original' (i.e. it does not break valuable ground artistically) is in any way at odds with the opposite opinion expressed about Malevich's painting, in view of the fact that the two paintings are, in a very viable if not quite absolute sense, indistinguishable. Recognition that the remarks are not about the same aesthetic object and therefore cannot be in contradiction easily resolves the paradox, which can only be re-introduced by insisting once again that, because of their visible similarity, remarks about Malevich's painting and about facsimiles of it must concern the same aesthetic object. This view derives plausibility, in the plastic arts, from a concentration of attention upon such cases as that of the lithograph, in which we have not one but multiple 'indistinguishable' privileged tokens: it is nevertheless a mistaken view when put into the form of a generalization about all those objects which are alike enough to fool - as we significantly say - even the most accomplished expert. The force of 'fool' in such a context derives from our possibly often misplaced but nevertheless quite natural assumption that the expert who chooses wrongly does not merely choose the wrong object but, possibly, the less valuable object.

Resistance to the general conclusion that the artist's product and some other object may be 'indistinguishable' and yet the former be aesthetically good in that it is, for example, original, and the latter not good in that respect, may be offered in a somewhat
different way, placing no stress upon the type/token distinction. It is sometimes claimed that such virtues as originality are not in any object, but that they are if anything virtues of the originator; and that since they are not virtues of the object they are, a fortiori, not aesthetic virtues of it. This is a view which has much intuitive plausibility in spite of the fact that it is not here, and indeed is not often, formulated with striking clarity and precision.¹ In order to meet it we must first of all distinguish between the merely descriptive and the honorific uses of such terms as 'original', 'new', 'novel' and so on.² Whoever makes anything whatsoever is, in the flattest possible sense of the term, the originator of that object - although of course not necessarily the originator of the type, or 'design' of it. We distinguish between objects in which or by means of which new designs are initiated and objects which merely conform to existing designs, by describing the former as 'original' and the latter as 'unoriginal' or 'not original'; and these expressions, in this use, quite certainly attribute relational properties to the objects in question. They do not attribute virtue to, nor do they withhold it from, the authors of the objects; although of course approval of the

¹ See, for example, Beardsley's Aesthetics, pp.458-461, for as perspicuous a presentation of the case as any.
² See also the brief discussion of this point by myself and Maxwell Wright in 'Henze on Logic, Creativity and Art', AJP, 41 (1963) esp. p.383.
author is often only a short step away in ordinary discourse. Such approval, if given, may however be altogether misplaced, unless we assume that the production of novel objects, whether or not they are intrinsically admirable novelties, is itself an intrinsically admirable activity. This assumption will not bear much weight, although it is not uncommon to see a great load of argument laid carelessly upon it.

If novelty, or originality in the strictly descriptive sense, is not to be regarded as per se a species of excellence - as indeed it should not be so regarded - then we may recognise two varieties of novel object: the merely novel, and the novel-and-admirable. This recognition is made unnecessarily difficult by our indifferent use of the single term 'original'; we speak of an original work as contrasted with copies of it, and of an original work as contrasted with unoriginal (derivative, inferior) work. It is important, too, that we should not make the mistake of supposing that 'novel-and-admirable' is an expression invoking two or more properties or relations of the object - that of being novel and that of being admirable in some way altogether distinct from the novelty. To exploit the terminology of intrinsicality, it is not the case that we regard all novelty as intrinsically admirable, but it nevertheless is the case that we regard some novelties as intrinsically admirable, and what have been spoken of as the descriptive and the honorific uses of 'original' mark this distinction.
It remains to be shown that just as the descriptive application of 'original' is properly directed towards objects, as distinct from their authors, so too is the honorific application; and this demonstration is much more difficult. The difficulty is intimately connected with the fact that the honorific use of 'original' is reserved almost exclusively (in the view of many, utterly exclusively) for the works of man, whereas the descriptive use is not. The works of man have each a distinct place in the cultural history of man, and that is to say that each has a distinct location in the history of values. Thus, to the extent that artifacts are seen as having been deliberated within a cultural context, they are seen also as something like moves in a game, although a game of very great complexity with very imperfectly formulated and 'open' rules. The accidental occurrences of nature, including the accidental acts of man, on the other hand, are not in any sense whatever moves in a game - unless transcendentally a divine or satanic one. Thus, any natural or artificial, accidental or deliberated object whatsoever may be said to be 'new' in that its observers see it for the first time, and even 'new' in the sense that it has verifiably just occurred for the first time, but not 'new' in the sense that its occurrence just then merits applause unless its occurrence just then is more than an accident. We do not in general stand by and cheer the unfolding of events as such; even those who daily rejoice that things are as they are do so because they suppose that things are designed to be as they are,
perhaps by a special sort of artist working on the cosmic scale. And their peculiar problem is, of course, how to withhold praise from certain such novelties as unprecedented pestilence without impiety.

The virtue or merit of originality, then, is somehow attributable to an object as that object lies embedded in its cultural context. Objects arise in a context of cultural history - not merely one of natural history - ultimately by virtue of the efforts of human individuals, and it is therefore tempting to attribute the excellence not, so to speak, to the feast, but to the founder. But this would be a mistake; it by no means follows from the fact that certain excellences are context-dependent that they are not properly speaking excellences of the object-in-context, but of the author of that object-in-context. 'Good knight's move!' does not entail 'He is a good chess player', although there are of course important logical connections between claims about moves and claims about players.

Originality (the virtue) in art poses a number of more or less familiar problems. How, for example, should we deal with works from an alien culture the proper history of which is not well known to us? Under such circumstances we cannot distinguish with confidence what was original (honorifically so) in its genetic setting from what was perhaps quite blatantly derivative. Some aestheticians, it is true, seem to see no problem here. Erich Kahler, for example, writes:

For it is this effort to express something inexpressible, to grasp and to shape something for the first time, it is this 'for the first time' that gives a work of art its
lasting freshness and vitality, its genuineness of language, its convincing vigor, so that ancient works, whose scopes and styles are by now utterly familiar to us and in one way or another left behind by the endeavours of our age, are still fully alive, and we are able to enjoy them as if they were created today. The trace of that ultimate effort that created them persists in them, the longing, the struggle, the suffering, the immediacy of all primal creation. When we feel certain works to be of secondary quality it is because all this is lacking in them; they echo, iterate and imitate the achievements of the masters.1

Clearly, a knowledge of the proper history of the work in question is built into such a position as a presupposition; or else, if it is not, the conviction that originality can be discerned by simple inspection of the work is an untenantably mystical one, since we could have nothing but the barest intuition that some given work is not slavishly derived from that of an earlier, undiscovered master. This is the sort of difficulty which critics must face, and which philosophers cannot abolish on their behalf by a simple act of legislation. We are able to avoid mistakenly attributing honorific originality to an object if we resolve, as critics, never to make such an attribution; but by this course we show ourselves not to have stumbled upon the boundaries of sound critical practice, but to have erected them ourselves.

It would seem, then, to be possible to admit Hare's contention (at least for argumentative purposes) that '... it is the purpose of

the word "good" and other value-words to be used for teaching standards', but at the same time to deny that the application of the word 'good' to one picture and the refusal to apply it to another which is '...in all other respects exactly similar' would be contradictory and would defeat '...the purpose for which the word is designed'. The logic of identity, of 'exact similarity', and of difference, in connection with aesthetic objects in general and works of art in particular, is of such a complexity as to frustrate so simple a theoretical scheme. Not even the last kick of argument - that, analytically, remarks which bear upon an object in relation to its context or setting do not bear upon the object simpliciter - will effectively disqualify the excellence of originality from candidature as a possible excellence of works of art. To do this it must first be shown that works of art are, must be, objects simpliciter; and this has not been shown nor does it seem likely that it could be shown by philosophical argument. We must in the end defer to actual critical practice, and it simply is the case that critics sometimes treat Mona Lisa (for example) as a work of art in which the technique of sfumato is newly developed - that is to say, they regard that work of art which is called Mona Lisa as an object (whether token or type is here irrelevant) in a context. That critics sometimes do and sometimes do not regard works of art in this light, or speak of them in this way, is not a sign of inconsistency in critical practice, but of complexity.
In order to fill out and give substance to these criticisms of traditional assumptions and procedure in aesthetics it would seem worth while to look more carefully at an entire range of epithets, phrases and expressions - of which 'good' is only one - without commitment to the view that 'good' will do duty for the rest either as the most typical or as the most general of them. The use of such expressions has already been characterized roughly as the utterance of verdicts, and before attempting a firmer account of them it is important to remind oneself that aesthetic verdicts are members of the larger family of aesthetic remarks. If it is true, as has been claimed, that aesthetic remarks are not made of necessity by means of any particular words or phrases, then this is true also of verdicts; and moreover if it is true that the correct application of aesthetic remarks is not governed by specifiable necessary and sufficient conditions as set out in terms of natural properties, then so also is this true of verdicts.

Verdicts do not differ from the general run of aesthetic remarks in any very simple and clear-cut way. It is, as will shortly become apparent, partly a question of the extent to which the giving of reasons in support of a remark is possible, which determines whether or not that remark should be regarded as a verdict. A critic may be asked to justify 'What an unadventurous work!' whereas he is not ordinarily pressed to act or speak in support of 'What a lovely patina!' Unless we are novices, learning about the arts and the
criticism of the arts, we shall in the latter case simply agree or disagree with him; we shall not ask him what *reasons* he has for maintaining that the patina is lovely. Or, if we do so, it will very likely be as a rhetorical device: a critic may sometimes be ridiculed by being challenged to defend his remarks in a way in which they cannot be defended - although his complicity in the misunderstanding is a precondition of success.

That verdicts may involve evidence and the giving of reasons is connected with the fact that, unlike the generality of aesthetic remarks, they are directed not, so to speak, at objects much as pure descriptions are directed, but are offered as being in some sense for them or against them. Much of the point of the following investigation is to give a clearer sense to the notion of the partisanship of verdicts in relation to objects through a scrutiny of examples. It is, of course, superficially contradictory to insist that verdicts are not necessarily uttered in any set forms of words - that there are perhaps no words whose exclusive function it is to convey aesthetic verdicts - and then to set out a selection of words for an inspection which purports to be an inquiry into *verdicts*. The contradiction is more apparent than real. Firstly: although, for example, the word 'ugly' may not invariably and necessarily be used to convey an aesthetic verdict, it is nevertheless generally and typically so used. And secondly, it is only needful, in order to legitimize the procedure, to stipulate that the words and phrases set
out below are to be regarded as having been taken from aesthetic contexts of utterance in which they have their most characteristic role. The only uncertainty about the propriety of including this or that example stems from the inherent uncertainty regarding the position of any example in typical use upon the spectrum of aesthetic remarks as a whole. Since most if not all aesthetic remarks can fairly easily be pressed into service for the utterance of verdicts it will never be very difficult to construct arguments that this or that example most typically is, or most typically is not, used as a verdict. Such arguments, however, while they might tend to show that there is some arbitrariness in the choice of examples, should equally tend to show which are the better - or at any rate the least contentious - ones, and not that the entire enterprise is unsound.

The strategy to be adopted involves the allocation of verdicts to one or other of six groups formed out of the deliberately imprecise notions of 'pro' and 'con', together with the classifying expressions 'Genetic', 'Open' and 'Consequential'. These heads are explained in the following way.

Pro and Con: A livelier grasp of the notion of partisanship is what is sought, and therefore cannot be given priority over an inquiry into the actual use of verdicts. To the objection that is impossible to allocate particulars to classes without a full understanding of the relevant differentiae it
must be countered that most people can, for example, competently assign a great range of organisms to the class of animals or to that of vegetables, but this does not entail that they are able to give an account of the differences which would satisfy a biologist. Nor, to be sure, is it quite certain that most people would make no mistakes. Even as scientists, we begin with coarse differentiae and then upon closer examination of the character of the objects so netted we refine, or even altogether revise our original principles. And just as there are organisms to the classification of which the simple animal-vegetable distinction is not apt, so no doubt are there verdicts which are neither plainly pro nor con. A verdict like 'modest' seems sometimes to occupy such an ambiguous position.

**Genetic:**
Verdicts are sometimes only to be explained or accounted for in terms of the object to which they refer regarded as being the result or consequence of formative factors or conditions.

**Open:**
Verdicts are often inexplicit as to whether the object is regarded as something which has a history, or as something which itself brings about effects or
consequences. Sometimes they seem quite explicitly to refer to the object in neither of these roles or capacities, but simply as a phenomenon detached from the causal sequence. Thus, 'first-class' seems to invoke in some way an object's peers, but not its origins or its effects. Whether or not this impression can be sustained upon closer analysis, it seems safe to treat all such verdicts initially as open with respect to origins and to consequences.

**Consequential:** Verdicts often make the plainest possible reference to an object in its instrumental or affective capacity. Thus, 'moving' would be a senseless verdict if nobody were ever emotionally moved by a work of art, and would be inappropriate of a given object if that object did not move the critic who was author of the verdict, or at least seem to him to be likely to move others.

There follows a selection of verdicts distributed in what seems to be the most natural way under these heads. The first example given, in each case, will be regarded for convenience in discussion as typical or characteristic of the group. It is not suggested that an exhaustive analysis of the samples so favoured would bring to light
every least facet and aspect - or even every significant facet and aspect - of aesthetic verdicts.

**GENETIC PRO:** Masterly, daring, well-executed, consummate, original, etc.

**OPEN PRO:** Good, excellent, first-rate, superb, splendid, etc.

**CONSEQUENTIAL PRO:** Stimulating, marvellous, exciting, breath-taking, moving, inspiring, impressive, etc.

**GENETIC CON:** Incompetent, badly-executed, derivative, vulgar, presumptuous, pretentious, etc.

**OPEN CON:** Bad, poor, trivial, worthless, negligible, etc.

**CONSEQUENTIAL CON:** Tedious, shocking, frightful, appalling, dreadful, tiresome, boring, etc.

There are, in addition to these examples, many which it is impossible to place confidently within this schema, either because two or more heads make equally compelling claim, or because none at all is conspicuously suitable. For example, although 'feeble' is distinctly **con**, is it, in typical use, genetic, open or consequential? 'Unassertive', on the other hand, is neither distinctly genetic nor consequential, and might be tentatively classified as 'open', but is it unambiguously either **pro** or **con**? In addition to these difficulties, the two groups of consequential verdicts contain at least some members which must be regarded as acquisitions of doubtful propriety. We do not nowadays mean to imply by our use of such words as 'frightful' that something is literally provocative of fear, nor even by
'breathtaking' that, speaking strictly, respiration is inhibited. There is certainly at least a prima facie case for re-allocating 'frightful' to Open con in spite of its literal sense; there may also be some slight inclination to transfer 'breathtaking' to Open con. But at least the leading instances, 'stimulating' and 'tedious', should prove unexceptionable.

There is one immediately striking feature of verdicts considered in the light of this classification. It is that no two verdicts are incompatible - that is to say, inapplicable at once to the same work of art, or to the same feature of it - merely because one is pro and the other con. Incompatibility will only occur between verdicts taken from corresponding groups, whether genetic, open or consequential, in the pro and con ranges respectively. We are not at liberty to say, coherently, that something is masterly and incompetent, although it is quite permissible to say that something is masterly and bad (as, for example, Hellenistic carving was widely held to be until quite recently) or that it is masterly and tedious (and perhaps the same illustration will serve). Incompatibility is not simply the inevitable consequence of using expressions which are each, in their ordinary uses, regarded as the negation or contrary of the other, but of the use of such expressions taken from corresponding but contrary groups. Thus, although 'good' and 'bad' are paradigmatically opposed they may nevertheless be applied together to the same work of art if their real import is not after all open but, say, genetic and consequential
respectively. If I offer the exegesis: 'By "good" I mean "well-made" and by "bad" I mean "boring"', then I have justified my admittedly eccentric and misleading verdict 'Good and bad'. If two apparently contradictory verdicts are regarded as falling within the same basic group, whether genetic, open or consequential, such a move is inadmissible, just as 'Masterly and incompetent' or 'Stimulating and tedious' are inadmissible.

It is a distinctive feature of open verdicts, whether pro or con, that they can fairly readily be distributed between either of the other two groups as the point of their use is made more explicit. They are, of all verdicts, the least specific, and to sharpen and give precision to them is as a general rule - although possibly not invariably - to re-allocate them either to the group of genetic or to that of consequential verdicts. Only after so much precision has been achieved are residual open verdicts which negate each other seen to be necessarily incompatible. Another way of putting the point, perhaps more simply, would be to say that the open verdicts listed above are, prima facie, 'open' in two senses: they may require further explication before they can be confidently allocated to their proper group, or they may be quite correctly placed where they are - as neither genetic nor consequential.

That a particular verdict is incompatible with its natural contradictory in the corresponding group by no means implies that it is incompatible with all, nor even with quite similar verdicts from that
corresponding group. 'Tedious and stimulating' is inadmissible; 'tedious and impressive' is not. 'Derivative and original' is inadmissible; 'derivative and well-executed' is not. These contrasts are much less sharp in the case of open verdicts. We may say that 'good and bad' (considered as bona fide open verdicts) is impossible, but what is contrastingly possible? 'Splendid and trivial' perhaps? One might well choose to say something of this sort about a firework display, or the decoration of a cake. Even so, however, there is a distinct feeling of strain here unless one or other of the terms is gently eased at least to the fringe of another group. 'Trivial', in this case, seems the natural candidate for interpretation in terms of a lack of profundity or of significance in the work - that is to say, in either genetic or consequential terms. It is by no means easy to think of a pair of verdicts, pro and con, which are neither distinctly genetic nor consequential and which are not in some degree evidently incompatible. I shall not maintain the radical view that this is because open is a quite artificial and unnatural class whose members must, upon analysis, inevitably escape elsewhere; although this is at least an indicated possibility. On such a view the members of the group of open verdicts would be 'open' only in the single sense that they are ambiguous or deceptive as they stand, and merely await allocation to their proper places after fuller investigation. If this were indeed the case it would go a long way towards explaining why it is that most, if not all, open pro verdicts seem obviously incompatible
with most, if not all, open con verdicts. Open verdicts, on this view, are inevitably unspecific verdicts, and what is (unspecifically) pro can scarcely avoid seeming to confront what is (unspecifically) con more or less squarely.

It must not be supposed that if open verdicts are, or tend to be, what might be called summaries of more specific remarks, that it is this which, in itself, distinguishes them from genetic and consequential verdicts. Indeed, it is in the very complexity of all verdicts - in the fact that reasons can usually be given in support of them, that they can be explicated or 'unpacked' - that verdicts are seen to differ from the generality of aesthetic remarks. And it is perhaps appropriate to insert a reminder at this point, before moving on to a consideration of how verdicts are justified, that the justification of an aesthetic verdict must be subject to the same limitations as the justification of any aesthetic remark; that is to say, the justification cannot take the form of a demonstration that necessary and sufficient natural conditions for the application of the verdict are satisfied. There is nothing which, because it is of such and such a description, must be, cannot but be, tedious or masterly or bad.

We justify aesthetic verdicts in terms of aesthetic remarks which, for the purposes in hand, are not themselves verdicts but which together constitute what might be called, in keeping with the legalistic metaphor, the evidence for the verdict. Thus, just as a
verdict of 'guilty' may be justified by evidence that an accused person was seen by reliable eye-witnesses to perform a certain action, so the aesthetic verdict 'masterly' may be justified by evidence that the work is uncommonly well done. The significant feature of the parallel is the absence in both cases of any strictly logical implication. It does not follow syllogistically that a person who performs a certain action is guilty, for there is not any universal major premise to the effect that all who perform this action are guilty. The insane perhaps, are not, nor are those who were provoked in certain ways, nor those who are able to show that they performed the action prior to a certain date upon which legislation was enacted, nor are those who charm the jury sufficiently, and so on. In a similar way, there is no universal major premise to the effect that whatever is uncommonly well done is masterly. Much copying, imitating or forgery, for example, may be uncommonly well done, but only the work of a Dossena or a van Meegeren is very likely to be called masterly; and even so there is a tendency amongst many critics to retain the accolade for award only to the work of the masters they emulated. On the other hand, there is a type of inference which is not totally unlike a deductive argument from sufficient conditions to be derived from an appeal to quasi-universal canons. As Margaret Macdonald has put it:

Throughout the history of an art there have accumulated a number of rules, prescriptions, prohibitions, called 'canons of the art'. A wise critic relates his spontaneous
judgment to the wisdom distilled in these formulae though neither artist nor critic regards them as absolute norms. Indeed, their very existence may prove a challenge to defy or go beyond them. Critical canons are, perhaps, more like rules of etiquette than morals and very unlike scientific law or logical principles.¹

The legal analogy, whilst it is illuminating as to the notion of the justification of verdicts in terms of evidence, is quite seriously misleading in other respects. Firstly, verdicts in law are - at least paradigmatically - supported quite scrupulously by considerations of fact, whereas the aesthetic remarks which support aesthetic verdicts are not necessarily factual, or at any rate not factual in the same sense. We are quite free to regard the elegance of an umbrella, or of a gesture, as a fact; but not to regard it as so mechanically demonstrable a fact as the length of the umbrella, or the sheer occurrence of some movement. Of course, the rudeness of a gesture might well be an issue at law in a prosecution for 'insulting behaviour', and to that extent it must be conceded that the law allows aesthetic, moral, and other kinds of non-(strictly)-factual remark to be used in evidence. Secondly, verdicts in criminal law are incomparably less complicated than aesthetic verdicts for at least one good reason. They are uttered for one purpose and one purpose only; and that is to decide the question whether an accused person should be freed without stain or should have sentence passed upon him. It is

¹ 'Some Distinctive Features of Criticism of the Arts', PASS, XXIII (1949) p.187.
because of this that prisoners are restricted to the simple two-value formula: 'guilty or not guilty?' and forbidden to plead 'careless' or 'unrepentant'. Aesthetic verdicts, by contrast, are uttered in an enormous variety of forms and with at least three distinct objectives; and they are correspondingly more complex.

Aesthetic verdicts are uttered in order to commend objects, to recommend objects to people, and to give expression to personal attitudes both with and without the intent to urge changes of attitude upon others. The first and last of these purposes or functions have given rise to theories dignified by titles: the performative theory and the emotive theory of aesthetic judgment, respectively. The theory that the point of utterance of an aesthetic verdict is to recommend objects has no traditionally sanctioned name, but might as well be called the predictive theory of aesthetic judgment. The difference between a commendation and recommendation is brought out by reflecting upon the logical propriety of such statements as: 'I recommend this to you as an outstanding example of the tedious, derivative and trival in art. You must see it - it is, as a matter of fact, an object that I know you will enjoy and which you - unlike myself - will no doubt wish to commend'. The difference between recommendation and emotive expression or persuasion is the difference between simple prediction ('This is an object that you will enjoy', or '...that it will be instructive for you to see'), and an utterance which is expressive of the speaker's preference-
attitudes and is or may be persuasive in intent. The distinction is not, of course, absolutely sharp, and it is most common to hear recommendations made in persuasive terms.

A good deal of disputation in recent aesthetic writings is attributable to what might be called the Fallacy of Single Explanations: aestheticians have tended to embrace one of these theories with perhaps excessive enthusiasm, and to regard the others not as supplementary but as competitive and in need of refutation. In consequence, the familiar verdicts of practical critics have tended to undergo a processing from which they emerge in a thoroughly denatured form which fits a favoured theory. Or, alternatively, the great variety of natural verdicts has been quite ignored in favour of the malleable single expression 'good' which can be pressed into the service of any theory at all and, by a tightening of rules or definitions, be withheld from any theory held in specific disesteem. But we are under no constraint, logical or otherwise, to treat these theories as irreconcilable competitors. Why should not some verdicts actually be performative, some emotive, and some predictive? Why indeed, should not some of them be intelligibly discussable in more than one role? The only combination which is evidently logically objectionable is that of a verdict regarded as both simply (i.e. non-persuasively) predictive and as persuasive. Apart from this, there is no compelling reason why a verdict should not be used, as verdicts are in fact used, both to commend and to persuade; nor any reason why an
act of commendation should not be, on occasion, an effective act of recommendation.

Any critic who offers a verdict might do so for any of these reasons, purposes or motives - and perhaps for others, although these are surely the most important. And the appropriate form of justification of the verdict he utters will depend upon the point of utterance; it will depend upon whether the verdict is a commendation, a recommendation, an emotive expression, or some combination of these possibilities.

Performative verdicts, as in the classic case of such performative utterances as the naming of ships, promising, saying (under appropriate circumstances) 'I will', and so on, are speech-acts the function of which is not to report upon or describe the world, but to change it. They are not merely words, but deeds. They perhaps differ from these classic cases in that as a general rule they change the world but little, and that often only temporarily. This is no doubt because the circumstances and ceremonial attendant upon or prior to the passing of performative aesthetic verdicts is not very clearly specified or specifiable; and in particular the authority vested by the community at large in the critic is uncertain and liable to withdrawal without notice. The great majority of critics (and by 'critic' is meant whoever utters an aesthetic verdict) are self-appointed, and the obligation which their audiences feel placed upon them to accept their verdicts is tenuous often to the point of non-
existence. Nevertheless, any critic may adopt something of the posture, the gravitas, of an umpire or a magistrate, and pronounce as if his verdicts were authoritative and binding; and to the extent that his audience is prepared to and does treat what he says as authoritative and binding, he has succeeded not merely in speaking but in acting in the world. It should not be overlooked that although such successes may be comparatively rare, they are none the less real. A critic who by general consent comes to have sufficient authority vested in him is able to commend works of art as surely as the properly appointed judge at a cattle show who places a ribbon round the neck of a favoured animal. Especially is this evidently so in the case of novel work to which existing canons of criticism apply only very doubtfully, or not at all. In such cases there is often a general public readiness to allow that critic with most charisma - generally nowadays a celebrated professional - to initiate a tradition of verdicts which will be widely followed. There is, it is true, no formal ceremony of appointment for the arbiters of contemporary taste, but there are many complicated informal moves which, by a loose collective consent, have the same effect. A sculptor of, say, giant hamburgers relies heavily upon the benediction 'Splendid' of an authoritative professional critic to smooth his path towards the ultimate acceptance of his work by the general public.

A performative verdict does not, strictly speaking, require reasons to be given in its support, but they are nevertheless
regularly offered. The range of possible cases is given by the fact that familiar works of art within a stable cultural tradition are usually embedded in a persistent matrix of canons, whereas genuine novelties may defy prevailing canons and implicitly call for new ones, or for new applications of old ones. A critic might seek to justify his verdict: 'Michelangelo's greatest work', ¹ passed upon The Rondanini Pieta, by saying: 'I don't know of any other single work of art by anyone that is more poignant, more moving...', and rely exclusively upon a justification in the form of aesthetic remarks of this by now almost incontrovertible kind to make his case for him. Or he might - and Moore does - lean upon personal authority instead of traditionally exemplary aesthetic remark, in asserting that prevailing canons are mistaken and, by implication, that new ones should be sought. For he continues:

Why should I and other sculptors I know, my contemporaries - I think that Giacometti feels this, I know Marino Marini feels it - find this work one of the most moving and greatest works we know of when it's a work which has such disunity in it? [my italics]...it's a work of art that for me means more because it doesn't fit in with all the theories of critics and aestheticians who say that one of the great things about a work of art must be its unity of style'. ²

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Ibid.
Of course, here Moore might be taken impishly to be saying that his own verdict is simply and deliberately crass, contradicting 'the theories of critics and aestheticians' for the sheer perverse pleasure of doing so. But I think that the invocation of Giacometti and Marini carries the implication that he supposes the verdict to be sound (i.e. justifiable in principle although the means are not yet available), and the 'theories' to be in need of revision. And certainly a verdict so weightily subscribed is a verdict which stands in little if an immediate need of the support of evidence. Lesser pundits, mere miserable theoreticians, must scrabble around for the evidence - in other words, must contrive the explicit revision of canons - after the principal authorities of our times have rough-hewn the material for their petty manipulations.

An aesthetic commendation, then, is something for which, in very many contexts, a capable judge is able to give reasons which will be quite widely acceptable; but for which he need not (and often either will not or cannot) give reasons if either the work or the commendation is novel, and if the judge has performative authority. Even when he does not give reasons, however, or when he confesses himself unable to do so, he will generally be supposed to have reasons, which it will become the duty of the journeymen of taste to investigate and bring to light. The suspicion that great critics may be in a perfectly clear sense Lords of Misrule in their powers with respect to judgment of genuine novelties, can only be silenced by the reflection
that this misrule is the basis of future, more systematic, legislation. There is, and must be, a point of entry for the purely arbitrary into the history of standards of taste, or else we should not find aesthetic verdicts such contentious utterances.

Evidence which is aptly chosen in support of a verdict designed to recommend an object differs from that which is given in support of a commendation, in the principles of its selection. A commendation relies upon aesthetic remarks which (it is believed) it would be appropriate for anyone whatsoever to make about the object if he could but free himself of ignorance and prejudice. It leans - but in as much as it is performative it does not depend - upon universal or quasi-universal canons. A recommendation - and it is for this reason that it leans not at all upon authority or upon canons for its force - is supported by aesthetic remarks which are not necessarily known, or believed, to be universally acceptable, but are thought to be within the capacity of a particular audience to utter willingly for itself. 'This is stimulating', we say, 'and by this we mean that you will derive pleasure or advantage from seeing it since it has the aesthetic features a,b,c...n which (so we believe) are of peculiar interest and importance to you'.

Emotive verdicts which are persuasive rather than merely expressive are, like recommendations, chosen and justified with a particular audience in mind. They differ from purely predictive verdicts - that is, from recommendations - in that the aesthetic
remarks which would be offered in support of a verdict, no less than the verdict itself, are designedly persuasive. That is to say, the speaker's aesthetic remarks are, and deliberately are, more than or other than merely correct in their application to the object: they prescribe an attitude to the object under review, and do not merely predict it.

The case of the thoroughgoing and exclusive Emotive Theorist of aesthetic verdicts would seem to rest substantially upon the truth of the contention that both the exclamatory and the imperative components of aesthetic verdicts are in some invariably connected way parts of a universal emotive language. In effect, he is committed to the view that such expressions as 'How sweet it is' are interpretable by English speakers as meaning (for example) 'Yum yum!' and 'Like this!' But it is surely perfectly evident that in somebody's utterance they might very plausibly mean 'Ugh!' and 'Keep off!' The key to understanding a verdict is to be sought not so much in what the words mean (although the limits of the public language must not be overstepped) as in what the speaker means by them; and it is for this reason that they cannot always be interpreted in one emotive sense rather than in another, or even in some cases as emotive at all. Much of our language is 'loaded', without a doubt, but we are able nevertheless, without impropriety, to shift the balance of some of the loads, and even occasionally to shed them altogether. Can we say that someone is a scoundrel without urging
our audience against him? Of course we can. Isn't Felix Krull an engaging scoundrel?

The very idea that verdicts may be pro or con depends ultimately upon the fact that there are human attitudes to things, and that these attitudes are not too individual and inconsistent, especially as they relate to fundamental issues of survival, power, sex and so on. But it by no means follows that a pro aesthetic verdict must be a command to adopt an attitude of favour or preference. It may do no more than predict that such an attitude will be adopted by a certain audience, or it may be an act of commendation or of discommendation made without any particular audience in mind at all. That prizewinners are generally admired does not entail that the award of a prize is a covert exhortation to admiration, although it seems contingently probable that if the human race lost the capacity to admire and to envy, it would cease to award prizes.

In sum: Verdicts are commonly uttered by critics for at least three distinguishable purposes; and they differ from the generality of aesthetic remarks primarily in that whereas the astute critic's problem in justifying an aesthetic remark is, most typically, how to put his finger on the natural feature which prompts it, his problem in justifying a verdict is less primitive. He must unpack the verdict into components which bear roughly the relation of evidence to the verdict. And the amount and kind of evidence which
it will be appropriate for him to offer will depend in turn upon the purpose for which the verdict is uttered: it will depend upon whether it is designedly performative, predictive or emotive.
Whether or not the arguments, contentions and considerations advanced in the last three chapters are entirely sound, they are clearly for the most part capable of extension to arts other than sculpture. With this general framework adumbrated it becomes possible to locate problems specific to sculpture without losing a grip on the relation of the more specific to the more general aesthetic issues.

It is probably correct to say that there is one problem which might be regarded as the aesthetic problem peculiar to sculpture; although it would no doubt be a mistake to insist that it is the only one. It might be put abstractly in terms of the distinction between the arts of two and those of three dimensions or, more concretely and traditionally, in terms of the domestic quarrel between the exemplary visual arts, painting and sculpture. Sir Joshua Reynolds told the students of the Royal Academy Schools, in his tenth Discourse delivered in 1780, that:

If these observations have hitherto referred principally to Painting, let it be remembered that this Art is much more extensive and complicated than Sculpture, and affords therefore a more ample field for criticism; and
as the greater includes the less, the leading principles of Sculpture are comprised in those of Painting.¹

This opinion, forged during the Renaissance and become firmly received opinion by the eighteenth century, is nowadays in severe disfavour. Efforts have been made by contemporary theorists, amongst whom Sir Herbert Read is conspicuous, to establish sculpture as an art with complete aesthetic autonomy whose 'leading principles' are quite distinct from those of painting. I shall argue, unfashionably, that an important mistake is involved in this view, no less than in Reynolds', and that neither faction has come properly to terms with the underlying epistemological issues.

A circumspect approach to the confused problems of the criticism of sculpture must in the end be very indirect indeed, arriving at last by way of certain more philosophically fundamental questions in the theory of perception. Aesthetic theory and the theory of our perceptual knowledge of the world have tended to keep a guarded distance, except when both are expounded by such a philosopher as the giant of Königsberg. And even Kant seems to have had difficulty in articulating the principles of the *Critique of Pure Reason* flawlessly with those of the *Critique of Aesthetic Judgement*, as his uneasy apparatus of distinction between 'determinant' and 'reflective' judgment shows.

¹ *Discourses on Art* (1961) p.155
A good deal of modern aesthetics has been written by avowed specialists in the arts, or by philosophers in only a somewhat exiguous sense of the word; and there is little doubt that the most influential writers, in terms of their effect upon the actual practices of artists and critics, are often to be counted amongst the least rigorous thinkers. Wassily Kandinsky, for example, has wielded enormous power as a theorist and teacher of the fine arts, in spite of the fact that his mystical prose is almost totally impenetrable to the intellect. He writes, characteristically:

"Generally speaking, colour directly influences the soul. Colour is the keyboard, the eyes are the hammers, the soul is the piano with many strings. The artist is the hand that plays, touching one key or another purposively, to cause vibrations in the soul. It is evident therefore that colour harmony must rest ultimately on the purposive playing upon the human soul; this is one of the guiding principles of internal necessity." [Original emphasis]

It may be because one cannot discern quite clearly enough whether such dicta are absolutely senseless or poetic inflations of the merely trivial that profundity comes to be alleged of them. In part, no doubt, there is involved some act of homage to their distinguished artist author. However, a more perspicuous and plausible account of the connection between the sight of colours (for example) and judgments as to their harmony, is certainly called for; and here some

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1 Concerning the Spiritual in Art, first published in German in 1912, (1955) p.45.
It would be both foolish and presumptuous to attempt a definitive solution of longstanding epistemological problems merely as an incident to the present aesthetic inquiry. On the other hand, the matter is too fundamental to be ignored with impunity. The remainder of this and the following chapter should therefore be read as the merest outline of a theory of perception which, if it has a little more than a grain of truth in it, offers the present advantage that it illuminates much that was obscure in the theory of the criticism of the two and the three-dimensional arts. Indeed, the debt of the visual arts to philosophy, if it is real, is reciprocal; for the theory I shall outline owes its key concept to the art of representational painting and drawing.

Philosophical theories of perception have for some time been burdened with such notions as 'the contents of the visual field' and 'the mosaic of sense-data', which have been urged, amongst others, as candidates for the status of the true objects of visual perception. These, or something like them, it has been maintained, are what we really see. But the transitive logic of verbs of perception is such that their proper objects seem to be required to have at least quasi-substantial properties - in particular, to need a location. One of the most serious obstacles to agreement between philosophers who accept as common ground that the true objects of perception are not
the objects of naive or of scientific realism, has been the problem of correctly locating these tenuous entities. Many suggestions have been made, ranging from 'in the visual field' - wherever precisely that may be - through 'on the retina of the eye' to 'in the mind of the perceiver'.

In providing these disputants with a new and altogether more plausible candidate, viz. on the surface of an imaginary perpendicular-planar picture plane interposed at roughly picture-viewing distance between the viewer and what is in view, I do not wish to seem to endorse their shared view. On the contrary, I hope to show that an understanding of the role of the picture plane in perceptual judgments dispels any inclination to contrast 'the true objects of perception' with those objects of common experience which the ordinary man supposes himself to see.

It must be pointed out too, by way of preamble, that although vision - in the ordinary viewer's sense, not the seer's sense of preternatural insight - is fundamental to the appreciation and criticism of sculpture, it is by no means the case that other senses are totally irrelevant. Researches into the phenomenon known as 'synaesthesia' strongly suggest, as do various speculative a priori and also linguistic considerations, that the interaction and mutual dependence of the several sensory modes is an important factor in perception. And even if the complete logical and empirical independence of the judgments of the various senses were suddenly and
surprisingly to be demonstrated, it would not follow that criticism of the visual arts, and especially of sculpture, is within the exclusive province of the disembodied eye. It is no doubt true of much aesthetic writing, as David Pole says, that:

...it is, I think, in accordance with established usage to treat only the two distance senses, sight and hearing, as definitely aesthetic. Smell, it has been thought, is a borderline case.¹

Nevertheless to the extent that it is true it reveals a defect, not a merit in traditional thinking. And it is surely astonishing that he should add:

No doubt there are pleasing tactual sensations; but I never heard of the beauty or sublimity or other aesthetic excellence of tangible surfaces.

In the non-philosophical literature of sculpture there are many such references, typified by Lorenzo Ghiberti's remark about an antique carving that he had seen when visiting Rome: 'This statue had many refinements, which the eye could not perceive, but the hand could detect by touch'.² And in general sculptors - perhaps especially some modern sculptors - are inclined to emphasize the fact that they regard the tactile sensations actually or imaginably

² From Ghiberti's Commentaries, as quoted in Robert Goldwater and Marco Treves, edd., Artists on Art (1958) p.30.
derivable from their work as being of the greatest aesthetic importance.

In spite of this, I shall treat sight as the primary art-critical instrument for sculpture, as it undoubtedly is for painting. It does not seem that the extension of the discussion to comprehend all the sensory modes would involve the negotiation of any chasm of principle but merely - for present purposes - an unnecessary and confusing increase in the complexity of what is already a difficult argument.

* * * * *

It will be convenient to begin with a criticism of one highly specific theory of perception. In this way it will be possible to introduce ideas and terminology which, without the substratum of existing philosophical literature, might seem mere slogans. If a choice of motto were to be forced at this point it would be this: we directly perceive the world. This is not to insist upon the metaphysical view that we always perceive material objects, but only to deny the contrast which is often proposed between the objects of common sense and the so-called 'real' or 'true' or 'proper' objects of perception. Thus, we see a house, or a rainbow, not 'sensa' or
'sensa-data' from which some kind of inference to the presence of a house or a rainbow is always a required and more or less hazardous move.

Any theory of visual perception might as well be tested for its capacity to handle the problems associated with the perception of colours as in any other way. If a Direct Realist is to have a distinctive and coherent doctrine he must be prepared to maintain that our beliefs about the colours of things in the world are acquired directly by sight; that is to say, the beliefs we acquire upon occasion that we are presently seeing an object of some specified colour are not based or founded upon - and therefore cannot be mistakenly based or founded upon - any intermediate entities such as 'sensa' or 'sense-data', which are themselves the only objects 'actually' or 'really' perceived.

Of course this must not be taken to imply that we are incapable of making mistakes, whether about colours or anything else; and such mistakes may be placed within one or other of two broad classes. Very roughly, we may allocate to a class of hallucinations those cases in which a viewer believes that he is seeing a sample of a particular colour when he is demonstrably seeing no colour whatever; as for example in total darkness. A viewer who claims to see the colours of objects around him when he is securely blindfolded will generally be regarded as hallucinated, although there is of course always the logical possibility that his claims will invariably turn out to be
sound. In such a case we may be obliged, if trickery of one sort or another can be ruled out, to reconsider some of our basic and largely tacit presuppositions about both the physiology and the language of perception. The Russian woman, and her American rival, who are alleged to read 'unseen' text and to discriminate colours through their hands or fingers, present a case in point. If their claims are indeed bona fide, and it seems possible that they may be, then it is a nice question whether we should or should not be prepared to say that they see with their hands.

As a rule in clear cases of hallucination the claims made are quite wild, and indeed we make confident use of the perverse locution 'he's seeing things' to indicate that seeing things is precisely what he is not doing, but only imagining or falsely supposing that he is seeing things. Sometimes it is not quite clear whether we should allocate a certain case to the class of hallucinations or to that of illusions; and there is also the vaguer class of delusions hovering somewhere between them, about which it will be prudent, if a little cowardly, not to dogmatize here. The two classes of hallucination and illusion will suffice for present purposes.

In a typical illusion, to make the contrast with hallucination, something is seen but a mistake is made about either its nature or its location, or both. For example, the lady on a conjuror's stage with her head in a black bag may be thought by the victim of illusion to be a lady with no head at all. The fact that there is
nevertheless a viable sense in which this viewer might be said to see what is in front of him accurately or correctly (meaning, very roughly, as a camera would 'see' it), in spite of his inclination to misidentify or misdescribe what he sees, may well be the sort of consideration that has most strongly influenced proponents of 'indirect' theories of perception. It is certainly a prima facie paradox, which I hope to resolve shortly, to say that a viewer sees correctly and is nevertheless the victim of illusion.

The technical term 'veridical perception' is an invention designed specifically to contrast with 'illusion'; cases of the one being necessarily not cases of the other. The notion of seeing correctly, as contrasted with that of mis-seeing, is somewhat different, and much confusion has been engendered by the identification of 'veridical perception' with 'seeing correctly', and of 'illusion' with 'mis-seeing'.

The difference between a case of visual illusion and one of veridical perception, as drawn by a Direct Realist, is somewhat as follows. It is not that victims of an illusion see something that does not exist: the notion of seeing something that does not exist is simply absurd. The notion of believing that one sees something that does not exist, however, is perfectly intelligible. The difference should not be put in terms of what does and what does not exist, but rather thus: whereas the victim of an illusion and a 'veridical' perceiver both see something that exists, the former acquires (by
sight) mistaken beliefs either about the identity or about the proper description of that thing, while the latter acquires only true beliefs.

It will be helpful at this point to examine a positive theory, and I have chosen, for its relative simplicity and clarity of expression, the theory recently advanced by D.M. Armstrong, who identifies veridical perception with the acquisition of true beliefs about the world. He writes:

I should now like to say that veridical perception is the acquiring of up-to-the-moment true belief about the world, using 'true belief' neither to exclude nor to entail knowledge.²

A sympathetic way of treating this claim would be to regard it as a stipulative definition of the term 'veridical perception'. In this way it becomes securely unfalsifiable, although there may be good reason for taking it with a pinch of salt.

One interesting feature of the thesis is that it seems to give us a means of distinguishing empirically between cases of illusion and cases of veridical perception. Beliefs are, at least in principle, investigable; 'perceptions', on the other hand, are notoriously inscrutable or - as some philosophers have put it -

¹ Perception and the Physical World (1961). But see note 2 below.
² This version, revised to meet objections to earlier formulations, is to be found in 'Max Deutscher and Perception', AJP, 41 (1963) p. 246.
'private'. Adverting to the particular case of colour perception, Armstrong makes a suggestion about the appropriate way to investigate beliefs formed through visual perception. Concerning the colour of his garden gate, he writes:

I may...not be able to specify the shade, because of an inadequate colour vocabulary. But I could still be said to know\(^1\) what the precise shade of colour was while I was looking at the gate, even though I did not know what its name was, because I would be able to pass certain tests. I could, for instance, note that the colour was identical with a certain shade in a colour chart. Failing the possibility of my noting this, or of noting something like this, I could not be said to perceive just what was the precise shade of colour of the gate.\(^2\)

He does not, however, explore the question of exactly how the use of colour charts is to advance an enterprise which admittedly may founder upon the paucity of our vocabulary; and the easy intuition that it must do so stands in need of some close examination.

Accordingly, I shall examine all the plausibly relevant or applicable colour-matching tasks and situations in such a way as to ensure - if no mistake is made - that no significant possibility is overlooked and that no pointless or irrelevant task or situation is solemnly retained in the canon where good ground for dismissing it can promptly be given. The elements of the task situation and the tasks themselves will be introduced under appropriate heads as follows.

\(^1\) For 'know' here one should evidently read 'form a true belief'. See the previous note.
THE OBJECT TO BE MATCHED:

This is an object, for the tasks to be considered a colour sample, about which a viewer's beliefs are to be tested for their truth or correctness. It must evidently be placed in or under suitable conditions for a viewer to see what colour it is. Direct Realism requires that there should actually be such conditions for any object of veridical perception: indeed, most ordinary conditions of daylight and moderate distance must be suitable conditions if the theory is not to be rendered unacceptably thin by the unrealistic specification of special or standard conditions. Armstrong does not suggest that a tape measure and a light meter would be required, as well as a colour chart, to cope with the problem of his gate. For the purpose of the tasks to be considered here it will be assumed that suitable conditions for seeing the colours of things obtain throughout, since it is trivially analytic that matching tasks cannot be successfully attempted under conditions which are not suitable for seeing the qualities in question correctly and forming true beliefs about them.

The object to be matched in such tests as these is, most typically, an opaque surface such as that of a paint manufacturer's sample or chip. It must not be forgotten, however, that the world is full of such intransigently awkward coloured things as the blue sky, the green underwater sea and the white mist through which things are seen. There are also the confusing factors of surface texture and gloss which quite seriously affect our judgments of the colour of
opaque material objects. We shall have to neglect also such philosophically inconvenient objects as shot silk and mother-of-pearl; although it is worth remarking that a theory of perception without any niche in its framework for the skindiver's experiences is probably much too tidy.

While it is possible to match some colour samples by laying others down beside them, there are situations in which this move is out of the question. We cannot lay a sample of blue beside the sky, in anything like the literal sense of 'beside'. A connected point which is of the utmost importance is that while it makes sense to speak of seeing a colour chip under suitable, and unsuitable conditions for the accurate determination of its colour by sight, it makes no sense to speak of seeing the blue of the sky or the purple of a shadow under suitable or unsuitable conditions. It makes no sense, that is to say, except for conditions which relate specifically to the viewer and his physiological or psychological competences; evidently he must not be jaundiced, wearing dark glasses, under the influence of post-hypnotic suggestion, and so on. The viewer's freedom from such impediments will be assumed: the point is that, unlike the colour chip, the blue sky and the purple shadow cannot be too far away, too tilted, or too dimly illuminated to be properly seen.
THE SAMPLE:

All conditions relating to the object that is to be matched relate equally to the sample with which it is matched, where the two can be set literally adjacent (see under 'the object and the sample' below). Matching is essentially a symmetrical relation, in which the role of object and sample might be reversed.

THE VIEWER:

It has already been remarked that a viewer without physical or psychological impediment is assumed. It is most important, however, that the notion of a normal viewer should be introduced without circularity: that is to say, not in terms of his competence at the specific tasks here to be considered. These are designed to show how much credence, if any, can be given to the idea that under most ordinary conditions a normal viewer may show that he forms true beliefs about precisely what colours he sees; and consequently the sense of 'normal' must be derived from the viewer's competence at tasks ordinarily used by optometrists to determine the normality of vision in general and of colour vision in particular.

It must be made clear from the start that the strict concentration of attention upon the single property of the colour of things is altogether theoretical and quite impractical. Isolated featureless patches of colour, as seen for example through a long narrow tube, are often entirely enigmatic. Viewers are ordinarily
faced with complex situations in which they have learnt to make use of many visual cues, perhaps especially of distance cues but also of shape and object-recognition cues, in forming their estimates of the colour of things. The problem of determining, by sight, whether two coloured objects seen at different distances are in fact the same colour is totally insoluble if the viewer is deprived of all those ancillary cues from which he recognizes that the objects are at different distances. In the matching tasks to be considered the viewer will be assumed to have the benefit of a natural context and the right to natural assumptions, as for example that samples and objects which appear to be of the same shape and size, and at the same distance, are indeed so. Our purpose is not to trick our imaginary viewer but, on the contrary, to give him every possible aid.

THE OBJECT AND THE SAMPLE:

The object and the sample will be assumed throughout to be materially similar wherever this provision has sensible content. That is to say, where the object is a coloured chip of matt paint, then the appropriate samples will be similar chips of matt paint which differ from the object, if at all, only in their colour. At the other extreme of possibility we have such objects as sunsets and rainbows: the only kind of match appropriate to such things, as will shortly emerge, is what might be called a model match (of which a picture match is a special case), as contrasted with a direct match. There is no sample sunset that we can take up to and lay down literally
beside an object sunset, since a sunset does not admit of the application of the concept of literal proximity, or of movement independently of a fixed observer and source of light.

A case in some ways intermediate between the blue sky and the blue paint chip is that of the blue distant hill. If we consider what is, in fact, a green hill, then a direct match of its green is possible - at the most literal understanding by means of a few square feet of similar vegetation. But only a picture-match is possible of 'its' blue. Its is placed in quotes of misgiving here as a sign of distress, for that blue is common to the green hill, the grey hill, the brown hill, and indeed the blue hill (if there is such a thing), all seen at a suitable distance. When the familiar systematic connection between the local colour of something and the colour it 'looks' or 'appears' or 'seems' breaks down, it is a serious problem to what object we should attribute the apparent or 'picture' colour. A similar puzzle arises in the case of coloured shadows. Perhaps we should speak of 'the blue distance', by analogy with 'the blue sky'; but then, whereas we can say that the hills are lent (or given) their blue by the distance, we cannot say that the birds are lent their blue by the sky. They too are only lent blue, if at all, by distance.

For convenience, and in order to dismiss the immediately irrelevant complexities of visual memory, all the task situations will be taken to be such that the object and the sample are visible
to the viewer at once, and adjacent to each other. 'Adjacent' is, of
course, ambiguous: it may mean that the sample and the object are side
by side and at the same distance from the viewer; or that, although
they are not literally side by side, they would be so represented upon
the picture plane in a standard perspective projection. We should not
describe the latter as cases of the sample and object being apparently
adjacent since it is often very clearly apparent, from cues other than
colour, that one of them is nearer to the viewer than the other; and
the formula 'occupying adjacent regions of the visual field'
introduces a gratuitous and perhaps misleading concept with which we
can easily dispense.

To speak very strictly indeed it would be necessary to refer
explicitly throughout to monocular vision, accepting the consequent
slight artificiality of the discussion; or else to deal consistently in
terms of stereoscopy. The latter course is more fully realistic, but
it would call for a nagging pedantic precision in the formulation of
amendments and reservations to the central argument out of proportion
to the philosophical advantage. For the matching of colour,
particularly, we may think of the surfaces to be matched as placed
either literally adjacent or picture-adjacent from the point of view
of a binocular viewer. This involves, if the objects are not
literally adjacent, that they must overlap somewhat (as considered in
a plan view of the perspective projection); a condition which might
be unattainable in practice if the colour surfaces in question belong
to solid bodies inconveniently shaped and disposed. With coloured chips the practical difficulty is negligible and this is altogether a problem which, not having been overlooked, may safely be ignored.

Object and sample then - to summarize these points - may be literally adjacent. That is, side by side and equidistant from the viewer. They will occupy as nearly the same spatio-temporal region as is compatible with object and sample having distinct identities; both of their near surfaces lying in the same plane perpendicular to the viewer's line of sight.

Contrastingly, the object and sample may be picture adjacent: that is, placed in such a way that a central perspective projection upon any picture plane intermediate between the viewer and the objects would show them as literally adjacent on the picture plane although they are not literally adjacent in fact. In practice this simply means, of course, that one of the two - usually the sample - is nearer to the viewer than the other. The outstanding logical possibility that sample and object may be neither literally adjacent nor picture-adjacent, only introduces the presently irrelevant complexity of visual memory, arising out of the intervention of other objects, or of a time delay, between the visible object and sample.

If all the foregoing suggestions and stipulations are consolidated it will be seen - as indeed was intuitively obvious from the start - that the two states of affairs which may confront a viewer
who is put in a position to demonstrate that he acquires true beliefs about colours, by sight, are these:

1. The object and the sample, both being seen under suitable conditions for true beliefs about their colour to be formed, are placed \textit{literally adjacent}.

And

2. The object and the sample, both being seen under suitable conditions for true beliefs about their colour to be formed, are placed \textit{picture adjacent}.

\textbf{THE MATCHING TASKS:}

The tasks which it would evidently be plausible to propose under one or other of these two sets of circumstances are as follows:

\textbf{T1: WITH THE OBJECT AND A RANGE OF SAMPLES PLACED LITERALLY ADJACENT, SELECT A SAMPLE WHICH IS THE SAME COLOUR AS THE OBJECT.}

It is, of course, assumed that the range of available samples includes one which \textit{is} the same colour as the object. We might alternatively, but less conveniently, speak of the selection of the best available sample.

\textbf{T2: WITH THE OBJECT AND A RANGE OF SAMPLES PLACED PICTURE ADJACENT, SELECT A SAMPLE WHICH IS THE SAME COLOUR AS THE OBJECT.}

A point of importance in connection with T2 is that the final selection of sample must be made by the viewer without his having an opportunity to check his selection by direct - that is, literally
adjacent - matching. If successive attempts are allowed, each one being checked against the object and then, if necessary, improved upon, task T2 merely degenerates into a laborious version of T1 with the gratuitous introduction of a little visual memory.

A good example of a T2 task in a commonplace situation is already familiar, and distressing, to many motorists who have tried to select, inside an adequately lit shop, a retouching paint for their car which is - let us say - clearly visible through the window at some little distance. Whoever has not had this usually humiliating experience will not find it difficult to devise a comparable task, and will perhaps be surprised to discover how unreliable his judgment is.

T2 may be reduced to T1 as a special limiting case by diminishing the distance between object and sample towards zero. For a distinctive task, however, it does not seem unreasonable to place a viewer some twenty feet or so from Armstrong's gate, with his book of colour samples held at arm's length.

T3: WITH THE OBJECT AND A RANGE OF SAMPLES PLACED PICTURE ADJACENT, SELECT A SAMPLE WHICH, WHETHER OR NOT IT IS THE SAME COLOUR AS THE OBJECT, IS A PICTURE MATCH FOR THE OBJECT.

The example of naturalistic painting or photography will serve to illustrate the nature of the task; but something must be said at this point to clarify the relation between facsimiles, models and pictures.
A facsimile of an object - whether two or three dimensional - will be taken for present purposes to be a sample which, when appropriately placed, is totally indistinguishable from the object by sight in all its visible aspects. Visual discrimination between object and sample will be possible by virtue of spatio-temporal clues to individual identity and, of course, by means of such non-visible indications as differences in weight or concealed structure or constitution. A sample which perfectly matches the colour of a literally adjacent object - and considerable consonance of texture, surface finish and so on must be assumed for a good match - is a facsimile of the object in respect of colour. The aim of tasks T1 and T2 is to select, in the very different situations prescribed, colour facsimiles of the object.

A model of an object is a sample which, when placed picture adjacent (but not literally adjacent) is, in the chosen respects, indistinguishable from the object by sight from a viewer's predetermined and fixed viewpoint. A very pure example of a model, to bring out what is meant here, would be that of a sample luminous rod in a dark room which is indistinguishable in length from an object rod placed picture adjacent to it but at a different distance from the fixed viewpoint. The viewer in such an artificial context (it is derived from well-known laboratory experiments on human perception) lacks a cue to the relative sizes from their relative distances. He cannot say whether the rods are the same length, but his claim that they look the same length from his predetermined viewpoint is what
makes the sample a model of the object. This legislation about terms is, of course, merely for clarity and convenience. It is not argued that this is either the most ordinary or the most correct use of the word 'model' but only, at most, that it is the word best suited to the present technical and explanatory task.

Good examples of visual models in the present sense, a little less artificial than the luminous rods, would be the diorama type of display and colour stereo-photography, as compared with the actual scenes and objects that are modelled. The celebrated distorted Ames' room, familiar to all students of experimental psychology, might be described as a visual model of a possible normal room - indeed, of any number of normal rooms of different sizes. It may readily be contrasted with a facsimile of any normal room, which would necessarily be of precisely the same shape and size as the room copied; and the difference clearly hinges upon the fixed viewpoint from which the model is acceptable, as compared with the freedom to investigate facsimiles from all viewpoints. Evidently a facsimile is a limiting case of a model, just as task T1 is a limiting case of task T2.

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For an account of relevant experiments (but not for the underlying epistemology) see Adelbert Ames, Jr., Nature and Origins of Perceptions: Preliminary Laboratory Manual (in typescript, from Hanover, New Hampshire: The Hanover Institute, 1949).
A picture is a special case (not a limiting case in the sense above) of the more general model. It is a case which is particularly apt to the problem of colour matching. A picture is, in effect, a model subjected to the limitations perpendicular-planar two dimensionality. Illusionistic pictures represent the object that is pictured upon a picture plane which is perpendicular to the line of sight and of such a size and at such a distance from the viewer that its variation from the spherical (i.e., having all points on its surface equidistant from the viewer) is entirely negligible.

Naturalistic paintings of objects, and colour photographs as well, are severely restricted in their capacity to deceive the viewer and to achieve a telling trompe l'oeil. Their most obvious disadvantage is that the whole of a picture surface is, as a rule, lit to a uniform and moderate degree of brightness, while the intensity of reflected illumination from the differently coloured and shaded objects that are pictured may vary over an enormous range from deep shadow to full sunlight. Compensation by adjustment of the hue and saturation of the picture colour, bearing in mind the limitations of practical pigments, is seldom if ever altogether perfect. Nevertheless, the importance of naturalistic art in the development of human sensitivity to the
appearance of the world should not be underestimated.¹

More potentially successful as vehicles of spectacular trompe l'oeil are projected colour slides or films which permit variation in brightness over the picture plane. Moreover, the transition from picture to model via the projection of coloured light on to surfaces progressively relieved from the perpendicular-planar, is evidently continuous. Indeed, a distinction between picture and model can only be firmly preserved by insistence upon the two dimensional perpendicular plane surface as the defining characteristic of the picture. At the other limit, the distinction between model and facsimile can be firmly preserved only by insistence upon the fixed viewpoint for the model, with the implication that what is a satisfactory model from one viewpoint is not necessarily so from another.

Some of the effects and implications of the considerations that have just been introduced will not be developed fully in the present chapter. For immediate purposes, and to revert to colour matching, we must consider how the three basic tasks that have been outlined bear upon the question of the colour of Armstrong's gate and his claim to acquire, by sight, up-to-the-minute true beliefs about precisely

¹ Here, and in much of what follows, my debt to E.H.Gombrich's seminal work Art and Illusion (1960) will be evident. This is not to say that I would expect Professor Gombrich's assent to the theories advanced here.
what colour it is. First, however, it should be emphasized that
there cannot be any task (T4) bearing the relation to T3 that T2 bears
to T1. Whereas T1 selects a facsimile under perfect, and T2 under
somewhat disadvantageous - but not, it is agreed, impossible -
conditions, there is no correspondingly disadvantageous position from
which to attempt a T3 match. If anything is visible at all, then a
T3 (model or picture) match can in principle be made of it; and it
would be absurd to attempt to show fault in a T3 match by placing the
viewer or the sample to greater advantage. The essence of a model or
picture match is that the viewer is always in a position to make it
from wherever he actually stands, under whatever conditions; and
moreover he may only make it from where he stands and under these
conditions. If he moves, or if the model or picture moves, there is
no longer a match.

Although the matching of objects and visual models (including
pictures) is, as I shall argue, a key notion in a satisfactory theory
of perception, it will not help Armstrong with his gate. For we may
say quite certainly, and without even investigating what positive
features a good, true, or correct model or picture must have, that -
by stipulative definition - it cannot be a facsimile. In other words,
the successful selection of a sample which is a picture match of the
object could not conceivably demonstrate that the viewer had formed a
ture belief about the actual colour of that object. We cannot even
exploit the possibility of a systematic relation between actual colour
- or what painters call 'local colour' - and picture colour, for it does not seem that in general there is any such systematic relation, although there may be in certain special cases. Although we might be able sometimes to infer the actual colour of a near wall from the colour of a picture-match of it, we can infer nothing as to the local colour of the distant hills from the picture-matching blue.

Visual models or picture-matches do not provide us with samples of the colours that the objects pictured are. So much is platitudinous. A more surprising reflection is that they do not even show us what colour things look or appear in anything like the authoritative sense in which the phrase 'It looks such-and-such a colour' is usually intended. The remark 'It looks chocolate brown', made about a scarlet object seen under mercury vapour street lighting, might be given greater precision by the choice of a sample which is an acceptable picture-match for the object, offered together with the claim 'It looks exactly this colour' (it is assumed that the sample, unlike the object, is seen under normal lighting conditions). In the usual understanding of such an assertion there is, it is true, the implicit qualification '...from just here'; but there is not, I suggest, the important additional reservation '...with the sample just where it is'. It is too easily overlooked that if the sample is moved backward or forward, or tilted, or if the light falling on it is changed, then the match will no longer be good. Because of this it makes no sense to say that any particular sample is a sample of the
colour that the object looks; and it makes no sense to assert this even from a specified viewpoint. Objects simply do not have, and cannot have, a set of determinate 'looks' or 'appearances', one for each possible viewing position. We may say that a certain object and a certain model or picture of it are indistinguishable in appearance in one or more respects, but we may not say that, for each viewpoint, there is a sample which resembles the object in the appropriate way. There is an infinitely large number of quite different samples, all of which look alike from that viewpoint, and all of which look like the object. One of the most pernicious confusions in the whole traditional discussion of perception is attributable to the myth that objects not only have a fixed complement of local or real properties (which is true), but that they also have a fixed - albeit enormously large - complement of 'looks' or 'appearances'; one for each viewing position. Such a misleading doctrine seems to lurk behind most talk of 'the visual field' and of those 'sensa' or 'sense data' which are said to form a 'mosaic'. Ruskin's 'innocent eye' (see Ch.IV) seems to see this 'look' that the world is supposed to present; but the sample of it that he puts on a picture plane at three feet is quite different from the appropriate sample of it on a picture plane at thirty feet, or at a different angle, or in another light.

Turning our attention from T3 (picture or model matching tasks) to T1 (direct, literally adjacent facsimile matching), it is evident
upon reflection that this task also has no direct application to the problem of demonstrating that one acquires, by sight, true beliefs about the colours of things. To choose a matching sample from a range of colours that are literally adjacent to an object colour might be said to be making a measurement of the object colour, by analogy with the measurement of length or of angle; it cannot possibly be said to demonstrate that the successful wielder of the measuring technique had, prior to making the measurement, either a true or a false belief about the colour that he saw. A claim to acquire, on sight, a true (but unpublished) belief about the width of a gate may or may not be valid; the point is that one would not persuade an audience that one had acquired, by sight, a true belief by the comedy technique of laying a ruler against the gate and observing 'There! it is precisely three feet four inches wide'. The required demonstration in this case, as with colour or any other perceptible property, consists in the performance of a T2 task: that is to say, the viewer must first say (or offer a marked ruler as sample) 'The gate is...wide (or this colour, or that shape); and only after he has done so is a measurement of the property in question appropriate, to confirm or disconfirm the viewer's claim.

Now it happens to be the case that people are not, in general, particularly good at T2 colour matching tasks. In reasonably favourable circumstances, estimates of length are probably easier to
make since such problems are, literally, one-dimensional, whereas colour estimation depends upon complex assessments in terms of the connected variables of hue, saturation and brightness, and the differential sensitivity of the eye to light of different frequencies. Nevertheless, most of us do learn to achieve a moderate success in a modest range of situations, although - as has been remarked - hardly anyone has the skill to select a perfect retouching paint by sight without reducing the task-situation to a virtual measurement of the required colour.

We may make ourselves as successful as we choose at T2 tasks, of course, by stipulating for our purposes a broad enough target. If any sample from mid-orange to near-green will count as matching any yellow whatever (to consider only the colour-dimension of hue), then we shall find it quite easy to show that we form true beliefs in anything but queer lights, or deep shadow, or at considerable distances. The tacit recognition that this sort of accommodation is unsatisfactory is, presumably, at least a component of Armstrong's motivation to suggest that the vagueness of language might be stiffened by the precision of colour charts. 'But I could still be said to know what the precise shade of colour was [my emphasis] while I was looking at the gate!', he says, 'even though I did not know what its name was, because I would be able to pass certain tests.' And: 'Failing the possibility of my noting this [that the colour was identical with a certain shade
in a colour chart... I could not be said to perceive just what was the precise shade of colour of the gate.\(^1\) [original emphasis]

To summarize: Only the successful execution of a T2 type task can, in principle, demonstrate that a viewer has acquired, by sight, a true belief about the colour (shape, etc.) of an object that he sees. T3 tasks are not concerned with the 'local' properties of objects but only with the properties of pictures or models of the objects; and T1 tasks measure properties, they do not show what belief about those properties was entertained on sight prior to the act of measurement. But the remaining tasks, of a T2 type, do not answer Armstrong's needs, since:

1. Actual performance at these tasks yields results that are far from precise, and indeed it is doubtful whether any advantage at all is secured by the use of material samples to make good the deficiencies of language. Such positive techniques, in fact, merely reveal more precisely how imprecise our judgments normally are.

And:

2. There are very many commonplace perception situations in which the conduct of a T2 task is impossible since the selected sample cannot be tested for accuracy. It is impossible to lay a chosen sample literally beside the sky or beside the blue (distance blue) hill in order to check its correctness - and yet we surely wish to say that we may see the precise blue of the sky, or of the distance. Equally, we are entitled to say of somebody who offers us a dark

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\(^1\) loc. cit.
There are, then, two lines of objection to the identification of 'veridical' perception with the acquisition, by sight, of up-to-the-moment true beliefs about the world. The first is implicit in 1. above, and might be put in this way: either it must be granted that 'veridical' perception is extremely rare, especially perhaps in the case of colour perception - this if '...the precise shade of colour' is to mean what it says; or else it must be maintained that 'true belief' means 'roughly true belief'. But how roughly true must a belief be, in order to be true? How unsatisfactory a sample must Armstrong offer, from the collection of samples in his hand as he looks at his gate, before we would have agreed common ground with him on which to argue that he had acquired, by sight, a false belief about the colour?

It would seem that only a quite arbitrary answer can be given to this question, unless we reinterpret the notions of the truth or falsity of assertions about colours in terms of average human perceptual performances. Even so, we should be obliged to establish the range of normal deviation from the median estimate by experiment for each and every single perception situation - clearly an enterprise of staggering impracticality.

Secondly (and quite differently, for while the above considerations might be thought to go ad hominem against Armstrong's
formulation it would be possible to state the theory with less emphasis on the precision of perception beliefs), there is the problem of the perception of those things to which a T2 type task would be inappropriate owing to the impossibility of measuring the selected match. It seems far too great a sacrifice of common sense to say that the notion of acquiring true or false beliefs about the colour of the sky, of rainbows, shadows, distant hills, flames, and so on, is unintelligible. On the contrary, it is quite patently the case to common sense that a viewer who forms the belief, on sight, that a certain rainbow has no yellow in it, does not see the world rightly - he acquires a false belief, by sight.

It is for these reasons that a somewhat different formulation of a theory of perception, under the Direct Realist flag of convenience, will be proposed.
CHAPTER VII

OBJECT ACCOUNTS, MODEL ACCOUNTS AND PICTURE ACCOUNTS

Whenever someone can be held to have seen the world or some part or aspect of it rightly or correctly (deliberately to reject the technical jargon 'veridically' in favour of terms from ordinary language) it seems reasonable also to hold that he has acquired a new capacity to act discriminately or aptly in the world. Such action may, in principle, take the form of an utterance of a propositional character about what is seen, and may therefore be regarded, upon at least some if not all occasions, as exhibiting the acquisition of a belief. Some preference might be felt for an account of the situation in terms of capacity to act rather than in terms of belief formation because we are able, as all sentient creatures are, to act discriminately in relation to our environment even if we are deprived of language and are consequently unable to exhibit our capacities in terms of propositionally expressed beliefs. We might well prefer not to be obliged by our conceptual framework to defend such consequences as that a bird acquires the belief that the door of its cage is open when it flies through it; or that we ourselves acquire the belief that our front door is open when we enter successfully deep in thought about other matters.
Nothing very important hangs, for present purposes, upon how we elect to manage the notion of belief in terms of actual and possible behaviour, including linguistic behaviour, although it is perhaps worth pointing out that what we would say and what we would do in a given situation might differ considerably in implication, and could pose serious problems for whoever would try an empirical test of whether a viewer does or does not see correctly. To take an extreme case, suppose that a test subject is fitted with spectacles which - unknown to him - are image-inverting, and is then placed in front of an otherwise featureless wall on which an upright figure (say, a letter) is drawn. Let him next be given a range of sample letters similar in all respects except that of orientation, and be asked to show that he sees the orientation of the original letter correctly (i) by saying how it stands, and (ii) by selecting from the range of samples a figure which is similarly oriented to the original. It is to be expected that he would say that the original letter is inverted, but that he would choose an upright sample as exhibiting the same orientation as the original. The investigator's puzzle will be to decide whether he should accept the subject's words or his action as properly expressing or exhibiting the belief that he has acquired. It is a problem which might well confuse the experimental psychologist, and perhaps also the behaviouristically inclined philosopher; and which must not be allowed to confuse the present argument.
I shall take it that the perception action-capacities, or beliefs, in which we are interested for aesthetic purposes are linguistically expressed or expressible in terms which are of a roughly propositional character although, as has already been argued at length, aesthetic remarks are not as such propositions or statements of fact. Nevertheless, such remarks as 'It is a delicate shade of blue' or 'The tonal contrasts are dramatic' may be supposed to be the natural expressions of beliefs formed by sight which their author would probably withdraw if the object in question were shown not to be blue at all, or to be perfectly uniform in tone. In the latter instance the aesthetic remark might still be viable, perhaps as an ironic figure, but in this case the speaker would have formed the (correct) belief that the object was uniform in tone and merely chosen a devious way of saying so.

The problem to which attention must be given is this. It seems, and indeed the fact was remarked upon in the previous chapter, that there is a possibility opened up by our ordinary use of language which is superficially paradoxical and of which some clear account must be possible within the framework of any theory of perception with a serious claim upon our credulity. I refer to the possibility that a viewer may, on occasion, form mistaken beliefs as to matters of fact on sight, and may yet nevertheless be said to see correctly, to make no strictly visual mistake, or not to be the victim of sensory illusion - even if he is the victim of an illusion in some broader or different
sense. The famous example of the Headless Woman will help to clarify the point:

And when the plain man sees on the stage the Headless Woman, what he sees (and this is what he sees, whether he knows it or not) is not something 'unreal' or 'immaterial', but a woman against a dark background with her head in a black bag. If the trick is well done, he doesn't (because it's deliberately made very difficult for him) properly size up what he sees, or see what it is; but to say this is far from concluding that he sees something else.

To limit the area of argument I shall suppose it to be agreed that Austin is perfectly right about this. What the innocent spectator sees, if he looks just above the neck of the figure on the stage, is a black bag containing her head; although matters have been so contrived that he forms the belief - if he is sufficiently gullible - that he is seeing part of a continuous background some little distance behind the figure.

This is a classic illusion, like Pepper's Ghost and the Disappearing Lady. The problem is, should we describe its dupe as a victim of sensory illusion? Have his eyes deceived him, or has the illusionist deceived him? To take an even more extreme case of false belief formation: suppose that you and I own indistinguishable copies of a book, but that you do not know this; and upon seeing a copy on my desk you say 'I see that you have borrowed my book'. It is doubtful whether we should call this a case of illusion at all, except rather

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1 Austin, Sense and Sensibilia, p.14.
colloquially: 'You are under the illusion (or delusion) that this is your book'. But there is no doubt that you have formed, on sight, a false belief; and there is equally no doubt that the temptation to think of you as a victim of sensory illusion is negligible. You have made a mistake, it is true, but there is absolutely nothing wrong with your eyesight.

The difficult point, around which a great deal of disagreement over the problems of perception revolves, is expressible in terms of the Headless Woman by pointing out that the object on the stage might be, to a normal viewer normally placed, totally visually indistinguishable from an actually headless woman similarly placed. Let us suppose that this is in fact the case: indeed, let us suppose further, what is certainly possible, that there is a veritable parade of objects on the stage all of which achieve the illusion in different ways. Perhaps one will have a black velvet cloth stretched in front of her head; another will be placed behind a tilted mirror which reflects black cloth in the wings; another will be a headless dummy; and so on to the limit of a conjuror's ingenuity. All these objects may be, if they are well contrived, totally indistinguishable from one another by a normal viewer normally placed. They will each be a perfect model match, in the sense brought out in the previous chapter, for all of the others.

They will each be a perfect model match for all of the others, that is to say, to a viewer who sees correctly. The notion of 'seeing
correctly' is now contrasted, as it should be, with defective or aberrant vision. An astigmatic viewer is under the impression that lines with a certain orientation are less emphatic than lines with another orientation, when this is not the case. A colour-blind viewer is under the impression that certain colours are alike when they are not; and so on through all the possible varieties of visual aberration. Such viewers undergo sensory illusion in the only really clear meaning of that term: a sense organ - for example the organ of sight - malfunctions, and this malfunction may, if the viewer is unaware of it or unable to learn to compensate for it, be responsible for erroneous beliefs about the world.

We need to be able to deal with two basic possibilities: that of mis-seeing, which is the lot of victims of genuinely sensory illusion; and that of mis-taking what is seen, which is the lot of those who form imprudent or incorrect beliefs about the objective, inherent or intrinsic properties of what they see. It is not necessarily the case, although it is no doubt very often the case, that a viewer who mis-sees also makes mistakes. Someone for whom objects at a distance of several feet appear blurred or indistinct does not ordinarily form the belief that the world is perpetually dissolving as it passes outside an egocentrically defined range of clear vision. He may be able to recognize many moderately distant objects quite well, and form very sound beliefs about their properties, although he certainly mis-sees
them and would do well to have his sight attended to by an appropriate specialist.

These two possibilities are disastrously conflated in the concepts of 'veridical perception' and of that brand of 'illusion' with which veridical perception is in explicit contrast. Illusion, thus contrasted (and assuming Armstrong's account of veridical perception in terms of the acquisition of true beliefs), does not provide a conceptual scheme in which there is room for a distinction between mis-seeing and making mistakes about the world; and this distinction is so fundamental to common sense and to ordinary linguistic usage that, I suggest, we cannot do without it even for quite mandarin philosophical purposes, much less for our ordinary talk about the things we see.

A respectable motive - although not a sufficiently good reason - for seeking to abolish the distinction between mis-seeing and mistaking is the desire to avoid being compelled by some such chain of reasoning as follows to postulate esoteric objects of 'direct' perception:

A viewer sees correctly, yet he reports that he sees X when Y is in his line of sight (or, as we ordinarily say, when Y is what he is looking at).

To say that he sees correctly amounts to the claim that any normal viewer in his position has a legitimate option to say, amongst the many appropriate remarks that may be open to him, that he sees X.

Now if Y is what he is looking at, and if Y is not X (e.g. if Y equals 'tilted circle' and X equals 'ellipse') then two objects must somehow be involved.

If Y is an object of scientific, or even of common sense realism, and Y is not what A sees (or 'directly perceives'), although it is the only such object in the viewer's line of
sight and the only thing that he would ordinarily be said to be looking at; then what he sees (or 'directly perceives') must be some kind of esoteric object. For example, amongst the standard contenders for the role, it is often claimed that what the viewer 'directly perceives' is a sense datum. If he 'directly perceives' an elliptical sense datum, for example, then he may be said to see correctly when he claims to see something that is elliptical, even though the object in his line of sight may not be elliptical but circular.

I shall contend that this argument is invalid, especially in its third paragraph, and that there is in fact no need whatever to postulate objects of direct perception intermediate between the viewer and whatever it is that he is looking at. All that is needful is to give a use to the phrase 'correctly describe as' - or rather, to recognize that there already is a use - such that it is quite unparadoxical to say that what is correctly described as $X$ need not necessarily be $X$.

The classic example to bring out the issues sharply here is that of the distant star. Ayer argues that if a man says both that 'he sees a distant star which has an extension greater than that of the earth' and that he sees 'a silvery speck no bigger than a sixpence', then 'since it is impossible that the star should both be bigger than the earth and at the same time no bigger than a sixpence', therefore it follows either that 'at least one of his statements is empirically false' or that 'he has slipped from one to the other usage of the word "see"'. At the time of writing Ayer accepted the second of these

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alternatives, embracing the view that there is both a sense of 'see' in which the existence of the object putatively seen is implied, and a sense of 'see' in which it is not; and this is a move in the direction of the introduction of sense data as the objects of direct perception.

The 'two senses of "see"' argument has had a long run and been variously countered. A.R. White, for example, points out that the phrases 'a star which has an extension greater than that of the earth' and 'speck no bigger than a sixpence' do not come into logical collision; and that if Ayer supposed his example to provide logically incompatible answers to a question of the form 'What do you see?' he is mistaken. Moreover, merely different - but not incompatible - answers to the question do not pose problems calling for such radical solutions as Ayer ultimately proposes. White makes much of the distinction between what he calls descriptions and identifications, holding that '...the answer in terms of "a speck" describes what I see, while the answer in terms of "a star" identifies what I see'.

It does not seem to me that argument along these lines resolves the difficulty entirely, although it certainly goes some way in the direction of a solution. To revert to the case of the Headless Woman, it is not at all clear that the description-identification distinction

2 Ibid., p.2.
enables one to take a coercive grip on the facts. The alternatives analogous to 'small silvery speck' and 'star bigger than the earth' are evidently: 'headless woman' and 'woman with her head in a black bag'; and these are on the face of it either both putative 'descriptions' or both 'identifications'. They are not accounts which are saved from possible collision by their evident membership of the classes or categories which lie on either side of White's divider.

Somewhat different conceptual machinery is called for if this and similar cases are to be met, and I propose at this point to introduce two notions which are derived from the previous discussion of matching procedures, and especially from what was referred to in the previous Chapter as a 'T3' or model match. It will be recalled that a picture match is a special case of the more general model match. It is moreover one which has considerable importance in the discussion of perception within the context of a society which is thoroughly familiar with and makes a great deal of use of naturalistic pictorial images. I do not know of any empirical evidence that members of societies which entirely lack pictorial experience are prone not to say of tilted discs that they look elliptical, but it would seem a priori likely that this would be the case. Their language of matching, one should suppose, would be a language of models rather than of pictures. The difficulty of arranging empirical test of such intuitions is twofold: firstly, there are few societies lacking all pictorial experience with which we have a sufficiently sophisticated linguistic
contact to explore this question accurately; and secondly the boundary between pictures and models is very imprecise. Everybody has experience of two-dimensional perpendicular planar objects, even if these are only cliffs or walls, and while talk in terms of such objects may be technically talk in terms of models it will nevertheless be indistinguishable in practice from talk about pictures.

The notions to be introduced and distinguished, then, are those of the model (or picture) account of an object that is seen, and the object account of what is seen. A model match, to recapitulate, is provided by a sample which, when suitably placed, is indistinguishable or very nearly so from the object it is selected to match - of course, from the viewer's fixed viewpoint. A model account of an object that is seen is an account which describes or characterizes ('refers to' would be a suitably general expression) a visual model of that object. Similarly, a picture account of something that is seen is an account which refers to a perpendicular planar picture of that thing.

Since it is presupposed that all adequate models of anything are visually indistinguishable from it and from each other (from a viewer's fixed viewpoint), it is clear that a satisfactory account of any adequate model is an acceptable model account of the object that is seen. Thus, the spectator who says that he sees a headless woman on the stage has given, whether he knows it or not, a perfectly adequate model account of what he sees. If whatever is in fact on the stage is indistinguishable to a normal viewer from any one of half a dozen
or more objects with which a conjuror might work the trick, then an account of any of these objects will be an adequate model account of what is actually on the stage. Moreover, there is nothing to be said in favour of one of these rather than another, considered strictly as model accounts.

There is, of course, one model account which is peculiarly distinctive. This is the account of a model which happens to be that limiting case of a model - a facsimile. Thus, if a viewer says 'I see a woman with her head in a black bag', and if this is indeed what is on the stage, then we might regard his account as either a limiting case (facsimile) model account or, contrastingly, as an object account.

An object account of something seen is an account which is properly applicable to that thing, but not necessarily applicable to a model or picture, or even to a facsimile of it. Turning once more to the star: on the view here recommended 'I see a very small silvery speck' gives a picture account of the star that is seen, and 'I see a star much bigger than the earth' gives an object account of it. In saying that 'I see a very small silvery speck' gives a picture account of what is seen we mean that a picture of the visible part of the sky, placed at roughly normal picture viewing distance, which contained a small silvery speck, would be an adequate or acceptable picture match for the star. In a case of perfect illusionism it would be strictly indistinguishable from the star, as the lights on the dome of a
planetarium are indistinguishable from stars to the spectator who has forgotten or was never told where he is.

There is, it is true, an element of ambiguity about the object account '...a star much bigger than the earth'. This could, indeed, be a model - perhaps a facsimile - account. What we shall in general rely upon here is the utterer's own expressed intention; for he will very often know quite well what kind of account it is that he is proposing. And had he used a uniquely referring expression such as a proper name ('I see Sirius') there would be no possibility of uncertainty. It is interesting, and should not be overlooked, that the state of affairs under discussion is reversible. 'I see stars that are much bigger than the earth' might well be an acceptable model account of what is seen by the viewer of a very small painting. The corresponding object account would be '...little dabs of silvery paint'.

Similarly in the apparently philosophically indispensable case of the tilted disc: 'I see an elliptical shape (patch, area, region, etc.)' gives a picture account of a tilted circular disc. That is to say, a central perspective projection onto a picture plane perpendicular to a viewer's line of sight would be an (actual) ellipse. It happens to be an empirical fact, not a logical necessity, that we employ the pictorial projective devices that we do. A race of beings with the extraordinary convention of making pictures always upon corrugated or curved planes set at some angle other than the perpendicular might well come to invent names for some of the more commonly occurring actual
projected shapes in their system. These names would then take the place of those we ourselves use when giving picture accounts. Of course, it is very difficult to imagine a society in which all the very good reasons of simplicity, practicality, repeatability and so on which have led to the adoption of our system were ignored. It certainly seems to us that the perpendicular planar convention, although not logically necessary, is not arbitrary, and that any of the logically possible alternatives would be.

It is the case with the picture account, perhaps much more than with the more general and less precisely defined model account, that historical and cultural factors are of great importance in determining what will and what will not qualify as an adequate or acceptable picture. This is the point that Gombrich has made so well and with such a wealth of erudition, and it would be supererogatory to emulate his example. A summary of the drift of his argument will not, however, be out of place.

There is, first of all, a distinction to be drawn between naturalism and illusionism, about which Gombrich seems to be less than perfectly clear. The two cannot be run together for all of Gombrich's purposes, although it is certainly true that naturalistic pictorial

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1 op. cit.
conventions have come to be treated as offering material for adequate picture accounts of objects in cases where, for strict indistinguishability (thinking now in terms of matching tasks) only fully illusionistic devices would be perfectly appropriate. Naturalism is certainly, as Gombrich argues, partly conventional; but it does not seem anything like so certain that what is a successful visual illusion, when practised upon a modern Western man, would not have been equally successful against an ancient Oriental. The blue we accept as a naturalistic picture match for the blue of the sky might not be acceptable to someone in a different cultural tradition, but the blue outside the window that deceives us into thinking that we actually see the sky, when we do not, would very likely deceive our differently encultured viewer too.

Bearing in mind this distinction, and making due allowance for the tendency most writers have to blur it, the point to be made here has been well summarized by Steinberg:

...'technical capacity in imitation' implies what no one seriously believes: that nature confronts man with a fixed, invariant look. For what else does it mean to speak of 'mere skill in copying the model' (the words are Malraux's), but that the model's appearance is an objective fact susceptible of mechanical reproduction? We know better than that. Appearances reach us through the eye, and the eye - whether we speak with the psychologist or the embryologist - is part of the brain and therefore hopelessly involved in mysterious cerebral operations. Thus nature presents every generation (and every person who will use his eyes for more than nodding recognitions) with a unique and unrepeated facet of appearance...The encroaching archaism of old photographs is only the latest instance of an endless succession in which every new mode of nature-
representation eventually resigns its claim to co-identity with natural appearance. And if appearances are thus unstable in the human eye, their representation in art is not a matter of mechanical reproduction but of progressive revelation.¹

One or two illustrations will perhaps be helpful. Up to the last third of the nineteenth century shadows had generally been rendered by naturalistic painters in terms of a fairly narrow range of cooler or warmer browns with black as a limit, and perhaps with occasional hints of local colour on the objects in shadow. It was not until after the theoretically inspired researches of the Impressionists that the shadows in naturalistic art were given distinct hues. Shadows that are lilac, or green, simply did not appear in painting until roughly a century ago, and it seems reasonably safe to assume that such colours would not previously have been thought to match the appearance of the real world anything like so well as the traditional brown. Today, viewers whose perceptual opinions have been formed in part upon a diet of Impressionist painting are prone to distinguish colours in the world which would have been thought quite fanciful by people who differ, so far as we can guess, in no significant physiological respect, but who had learnt to see, and to give accounts of what they saw, in a different cultural milieu.

In a similar way, mediaeval draughtsmen and mediaeval audiences must have accepted their very imperfect perspectival devices as quite adequate to the naturalistic picturing of the world. Although mediaeval drawings of tables seem to us to be in the act of precipitating their contents forward into the spectator's lap, they cannot have seemed so to the contemporaneous eye. It is a preposterous notion that whole epochs of naturalistic art must have seemed wrong to races and generations of artists who are to be supposed to have enjoyed a clear idea of what would be right (by simply paying attention to how the world looks) but to have lacked the skill to reproduce this appearance upon parchment or plaster. A mediaeval draughtsman who drew receding parallels as parallel upon the picture plane instead of convergent towards the centre of vision could hardly have been expected to say, if challenged: 'The parallel edges of the table look as if they converge, of course, but I am incapable of drawing them so.' It is surely obvious that if the artist were capable of saying this, then there was no reason why he should not have drawn in the manner of a later century. In fact, if the view I am summarizing here is correct, it was because nobody had yet drawn the lines so (perhaps by chance at first), and the illusionistic success of the convergence been noticed, that nobody was yet in a position to say: 'parallels look convergent'.

It would no doubt be a mistake to exaggerated the importance of these considerations to a viable theory of perception. They are
introduced here only in order to fill out the schematic doctrine of model and picture accounts of visible objects with some factual and historical material which is, to say the least of it, not irrelevant. The question we ought to ask about picture accounts of the world, and about model accounts as well, is not always whether they are true in strictly and exactly measurable ways, but rather whether they are adequate and acceptable to the speaker's audience; and to this question qualified answer reflecting historical and cultural circumstances must be given. To simplify matters here is to distort them; nevertheless some distortion must be tolerated if the schematic account is to be presented in a reasonably clear and succinct way. Accordingly, I shall say no more about the differences and the relationship between a merely adequate, historically conditioned naturalistic picture account and a scrupulously exact, possibly timeless, illusionistic picture or model account. I shall deal, for simplicity and convenience, entirely in terms of the notion of that which is, in a general courtesy sense, 'indistinguishable' from the object pictured, from the viewer's viewpoint.

Returning now to the ideas of correct seeing, of mis-seeing and of making mistakes, the proposal is this: that a viewer who can either select or give a reasonable account of a model or picture of what he sees which would in fact match what he sees, thereby shows that he sees correctly. He may also be willing to offer an object account of what he sees, and if he does make such an attempt he may either get it
right or make a mistake, whether he sees correctly (as tested by the adequacy of the picture account that he would offer) or not. To give an example: a viewer who says 'I see a small silvery speck' may be taken to have seen a distant star correctly. He may go on to give an object account which is correct, or one which is mistaken: he may say 'I see a very distant star' or - and let us assume that this is a mistake - 'I see a moderately distant street lamp'. Or again, a viewer who mis-sees, saying perhaps 'I see two street lamps', may nevertheless go on to add '...but I have double vision; what I see is, of course, just one street lamp'.

The important difference between the theory now emerging and Armstrong's theory as it was roughly expounded in the previous chapter, is that it leaves open the possibility of actually making empirical test, upon any occasion whatsoever, of whether or not a viewer sees correctly, by having him carry out (for example, verbally) a T3 picture or model matching task. This is a task at which he has a real opportunity to achieve any desired degree of precision; whereas it will be remembered that in the case of the T2 tasks previously discussed it would be rather a matter of luck how close a normal viewer came to matching sample and object. Moreover, it is an open possibility, upon the proposed basis, to determine whether or not the viewer of an 'immaterial' object - a flame, a rainbow, a sky, a shadow, and so on - sees correctly; which is not possible if some 'medium sized specimen of dry goods', to use Austin's phrase, or 'material object', to be more
respectful, must be available against which to check the chosen sample by direct match.

A viewer may also, of course, in appropriate circumstances, carry out T2 tasks - or, in the proposed jargon, object account giving tasks. But failure to give a correct object account (or to offer a close T2 sample) does not, on the present view, necessarily imply mis-seeing, or sensory illusion; although it certainly does imply that some kind of mistake has been made.

I should like to say that we may acquire true beliefs about the world directly, by perception, but that the correct or normal functioning of this or that particular sense organ is not even a necessary condition for doing so. As has been remarked, a short-sighted person does not form the belief that the world beyond his range of clear vision is dissolving; and he may well become able, with practice, to recognize correctly the nature and true qualities of many objects of which he would be unable to give an acceptable picture account. What is a necessary condition for the acquisition of true beliefs about at least some of the real properties of things is that there should be sense organs which function systematically. If they also function normally, then so much the better. And of course, a systematic functioning which is abnormal will not result in the acquisition by sight (or by whatever individual sensory mode) of the full range of true beliefs as these are acquired by normal perceivers. For example, the colour blind viewer who has learnt to cope with
traffic signals from their position cannot cope, as a normally sighted viewer can, with occasional reversals of the position of the lights.

It is not intended to elaborate this theory here, or indeed to develop it in any way which does not help to throw light upon the aesthetic issues that are to be discussed in Chapter VIII. Although a very great number of important questions must be left open, one difficulty at least must be faced. Indeed, it is the very difficulty, if I am right, that has generated the greater part of the prevailing confusion about the perception of objects occupying two and those occupying three dimensions of space. To face it squarely will be the only sensible way to proceed.

It is here claimed that we ordinarily give, often indifferently, model (or picture) accounts of what we see and, or, object accounts. The difference, to recapitulate, is that an object account, if true, is true of the object that is seen but not necessarily applicable to models or pictures - or even to facsimiles - of it; whereas on the other hand what is true of a correct model or picture is not necessarily true of the object. The one is simply an account of the object, while the other is an account of the object in terms of a picture or model which would match it. What is said in giving an object account of something may also serve, sometimes, as a picture account, and vice-versa. For example, an object account of a tilted ellipse would be: 'elliptical' - but so too, as it happens, would a picture account be from very many
points of view, although there is one special axis of view from which a picture account of an elliptical shape would be 'circular', just as the reciprocal picture account of a circular shape is, from all axes of view but one, 'elliptical'.

Unfortunately (and this, I believe, is the reason for much of the confusion and cross-purpose in perceptual theory) these two types of account are so interwoven and mixed in our ordinary talk about what we see that we are not always clear on all occasions as to which type has actually been proposed. Indeed, that there is a difference which is expressible in the way suggested is not a fact to which our attention is often explicitly directed in the course of a normal education. We are sometimes quite unheeding of which account we have given, and our audience often has good reason to mistake our account since there are no strict formal criteria for determining the question. One fairly clumsy device is in common use, it is true: we often say 'It looks...', or 'It appears...' to herald a model or picture account, and 'It is...' to introduce an object account. But the usages are very far indeed from being strict. We say of the distant star that it is a tiny speck, and we say of the hills that they look distant. The latter case is rather interesting in as much as there seems here to be use made of that limiting case of the model, the facsimile. It is as if the speaker were to say: 'I'm not claiming quite that the hills are distant, but only that hills placed at a (considerable) distance would look just the same as these do'. The difference between these
claims is very slight indeed, but in other cases it might be considerable. For example, if the claim 'He looks happy' were to be made we could construe it, on 'facsimile' lines, as meaning that a normally happy person would be - in the relevant respects of expression, gesture and so on - quite indistinguishable visually from the object of the remark. But this does differ materially from the claim 'He is happy', since there is nothing even faintly paradoxical about the remark 'He looks happy, but is certainly pretending'. 'The hills look distant, but aren't really' is also possible, but the opportunity to say so truly is relatively rare. Only occasionally, perhaps when looking through the wrong end of field glasses, might we have occasion to say with propriety that the hills look distant, whilst at the same time cherishing the true belief that in fact they are quite near.

Even without introducing the complication of limiting cases it is clear that there are many capable language-users who would, on specific occasions if not invariably, be at a loss to say whether they were proposing an object account or a picture account. Nevertheless, if we are to find fault with the account that they give it is characteristic of our methodology that we take it one way or the other. If it is said that the hills look distant we object that they are not, and if it is said that the moon looks enormous we object that it looks only the size of a small coin at arm's length. The point is that although the utterance of a perception statement does not presuppose a clear and explicit grasp of the model account and object account distinction, the
effective criticism of such a statement does presuppose it, for what will go against one will not necessarily go against the other.

The question of precisely which type of account has been given upon any occasion; facsimile, model picture or object; is one which, like general questions about the meaning of utterances, is not amenable to simple solution by rote or rule. We cannot take a speaker's claim or admission of intention to have decisive authority — although we often and properly regard it as important — because it is sometimes a viable objection that he cannot mean what he says he means by the words he uses when these are sufficiently inappropriate. Thus, a speaker cannot intend the words 'It is (or appears to be) a tiny speck' to be taken as an object account, or even as a facsimile account of what he and his audience know to be a large distant star, any more than he can ordinarily intend the word 'Yes' to be taken as a form of denial.

It is obviously impossible to explore all the problems that arise here; for present purposes it is sufficient to establish that we do offer accounts of the two fundamentally different kinds distinguished here; that they are ordinarily tangled together in the skein of unreflective talk about what we perceive; and that disentangling them may not always — although it will quite often — be easy.

Only one point remains to be stressed before attempting to apply these considerations to the problems of painting and sculpture. It is that facsimile, model, or picture accounts, and object accounts, are all
accounts of what is seen. The former, however, are accounts given in terms of visual facsimiles, models or pictures of the thing that is seen. To hold that what is seen when a model account of what is seen is given, is a model, or an imaginary model, of what is seen, is to speak not so much darkly as incoherently. We do not see a headless woman, or an imaginary headless woman, when we say that what we see on the stage is (that is, is not distinguishable by sight from) a headless woman. We see (probably) a woman with her head in a black bag, and we describe her in terms of a visually indistinguishable object. Of course, if we think that our model account is actually an object account, then we have (probably) made a mistake. It would be surprising indeed if we did not make such mistakes from time to time - especially when conjurors pit their guile against us. In many, indeed in most ordinary cases, we have learnt from childhood to give both object accounts and picture accounts of things on sight, with confidence and a fair measure of success. The correctness or rightness of our vision, however, can only be tested by model or picture matching tasks. An inability to carry out such tasks with a considerable degree of accuracy (bearing in mind the point about the inherent imperfections of naturalistic picturing devices where these are employed) will certainly indicate sensory illusion. Erroneous object accounts, on the other hand, may indicate a defective education (as when, for example, never having seen a mirror, we mistakenly suppose certain objects to be behind or through it); or
else a conspiracy of either events or persons to defeat the
expectations even of normally educated viewers who see correctly (as
when, for example, an illusionist or a natural but rare illusory
phenomenon catches us out).

It will be the task of the following and final chapter to give
these considerations a concrete application to the problems of
aesthetic criticism.
CHAPTER VIII

THE AESTHETIC PERCEPTION OF SCULPTURE

The distinction between object accounts and - collectively - picture, model and facsimile accounts, corresponds to a difference between things and representations of things: although it cannot be too much stressed that the latter are all accounts of the object that is seen, no less than the former. They are accounts of it which are delivered in terms of pictures, models or facsimiles which would match it from the spectator's viewpoint; and matching pictures, models, and facsimiles might as well be referred to collectively as 'representations'.

The distinction between things and representations of things is one which has always been important - although it has seldom been kept perfectly clear - in the theory of art. Clive Bell's famous remark that 'The representative element in a work of art may or may not be harmful; always it is irrelevant' is immediately qualified in his next, much less familiar paragraph:

To appreciate a work of art we need bring with us nothing but a sense of form and colour and a knowledge of three-dimensional space. That bit of knowledge, I admit, is essential to the appreciation of many great works, since many of the most moving forms are created in three dimensions. To see a cube or a rhomboid as a flat pattern is to lower its significance...Pictures which would be insignificant if we saw them as flat patterns
are profoundly moving because, in fact, we see them as related planes. If the representation of three-dimensional space is to be called 'representation', then I agree that there is one kind of representation which is not irrelevant.¹ /My emphasis/

There are not, of course, two or more 'kinds of representation', one of which is and the rest are not relevant to the appreciation and criticism of painting. Ignoring the rather different question of symbolic or codified representation, there is only one broad 'kind of representation' by which three dimensional objects are naturalistically or illusionistically rendered on a two dimensional surface,² whether the objects be human heads or mere dull cubes. Bell's point presumably has to do with the kind of interest he thinks an audience likely to take in, say, the human image as contrasted with a mathematical model. He supposes (what is in any case not necessarily true) that we shall not feel any inclination to respond to what might loosely be called 'the associations' of a cube, as we shall to those of a head. It is also one of his principal theses that such 'associations' must be aesthetically irrelevant, but it is not this aspect of his now somewhat unfashionable position with which we are immediately concerned. The point to be brought out with all possible force and clarity concerns

¹ Art, Sect.I, Ch.I.
² The reservations discussed in the previous chapter, which take Gombrich's thesis into account, must not be overlooked.
the real distinction, only blurred and confused by Bell, between flat representations (particularly paintings) of solid objects and the objects thus represented.

This difference is surely simply enough characterized. It is a difference of one spatial dimension. Yet the temptation to abolish it for art critical purposes must be very strong, for not only was Bell hopelessly muddled about the matter but so too were the inveterate opponents of the brand of formalism for which he stood. De Witt Parker, for example, wrote:

The space of sculpture, like that of painting, is, of course, a represented or imaginary space, to be carefully distinguished from the real space of the room in which it is placed and the floor upon which it stands.1

Sculpture, a particular case of the general three dimensional object, is here explicitly assimilated to painting by being etherealized; its inconvenient bulk abolished by a wave of the theoretical wand. This tendency to render sculptures insubstantial for critical purposes is not nowadays so strong. Paul Weiss observes:

A. Hildebrand said that sculpture is a set of paintings around which we walk...but... As a result of his study of distinguished works in the history of sculpture, Herbert Read observes...that 'A very real confusion has always existed between the arts of sculpture and

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1 The Principles of Aesthetics, 1920 (reprinted 1946) pp.232-33
painting'. The 'confusion' has now been dispelled. No one would, today, I think, deny that sculpture and painting are distinct arts.¹

And yet, fresh from the resolution of the confusion, Weiss asserts only a few pages later, almost in Parker's very words of forty years earlier:

Like architecture and sculpture, painting presents us with a newly created space. That space is distinct from the common-sense space in which we daily live.²

Evidently, for all the apt invocation of Hildebrand and Read (about both of whom a good deal must be said in a moment) sculpture and painting have not at long last been properly distinguished but only once more conflated.

There are, it seems, two quite sharply divided parties to a dispute which, I argue, revolves inconclusively about a shared mistake having its roots in the language of visual perception. On the one hand it is claimed, as typically by Sir Joshua Reynolds in the passage quoted at the beginning of Chapter VI, that sculptures constitute, for appreciative and critical purposes, a mere sub-class of those aesthetic objects which comprise the class of paintings. On the other hand it is asserted - as most vigorously by Sir Herbert Read - that the classes are, for appreciative and critical purposes, utterly distinct. Read writes:

² Ibid., p.101.
The arts do not now compete to express a common ideal... Instead, the arts seek to distinguish themselves from one another, to preserve boundaries, to rely on distinct sensations, to appeal to specialized sensibilities. It is claimed that each art has its own proper virtues, determined by the nature of its tools and materials, and that the faculties engaged by these tools and materials are so distinct that the products cannot usefully be compared.¹

How sculpture is to appeal to the specialized three dimensional 'tactile', 'plastic', or 'haptic' sensibilities of which Read speaks unless it is actually handled - not in mere imagination but in fact - is not at all clear in view of his Berkeley-Ruskin theory of visual perception:

If we merely 'look at' sculpture /no reason is given, or is implicit in the argument, for the inverted commas/ even with our sophisticated vision, which is capable of reading into the visual image the conceptual knowledge we possess from previous experience of three-dimensional objects, still we get merely a two-dimensional impression of a three-dimensional object.²

And, to emphasize that there is no really effective commerce between vision and what he calls 'plastic sensibility' he insists that:

...sculpture owes its individuality as an art to unique plastic qualities, to the possession and exploitation of a special kind of sensibility. Its uniqueness consists in its realization of an integral mass in actual space. The sensibility required for this effort of realization

¹ The Art of Sculpture (1961) p.3.
² Ibid., p.50.
A typical expression of the contemporary horror of any mention of the flat image in a sculpture critical context emerges in the course of a criticism by J.R.M. McCheyne of a woodcarving by Barbara Hepworth, which he castigates as 'brutal and insensitive'; adding, however:

These criticisms of this work seem to be false and unreasonable if only the photograph is looked at. McCheyne is actually reviewing an illustrated book and I would emphasize that I have considered the carving itself, which is, of course, the only way to look at sculpture and to remind ourselves in so doing that as an art sculpture has nothing in common with two-dimensional representations of any kind. Sculpture is the creation of solid forms which give aesthetic pleasure. There is an infinite variety of such forms and they arise and are proliferated by laws which are formal and not yet picturesque.¹

Now there is no doubt that an adult viewer of very ordinary accomplishment and of no special sensibility whatever is capable of giving, on sight of a good photograph, sundry object accounts of the object that is pictured which are accurate in a great many respects. The most ordinary observer - not even to call upon an expert - is able to tell much about the shape (the three dimensional shape) of a woodcarving from even a single photograph of it. Now I do not mean to suggest that looking at photographs of sculpture is an entirely satisfactory alternative to looking at the solid originals, by only that it seems incredible that a sculpture which appears to be,

in a three dimensional way, 'brutal and insensitive' to a present viewer should not seem so to a viewer of an adequate photograph. The most that McCheyne can mean, surely, is that considered as a two dimensional object in its own right the photographic image on the printed page is in some ways satisfactory; whereas in the presence of the solid work we should look in vain for these virtues and find instead only faults of a strictly three dimensional kind.

Now it is true that the sculpture is unlikely to be, say, a delicate shade of silvery grey, as the photograph might be; but there certainly are features of the flat image which may be equally features of the solid object - for example a nice relationship of breadth to height. Those things which can be said only of the photographic image and not of the object, or vice-versa, concern matters in respect of which the two are strictly incomparable: it is not possible that the object might seem 'brutal and insensitive' in fact, and not seem so in image, unless the photograph is held to be misleading or deceptive as to the solid shape of the sculpture. Now this is not McCheyne's point. He does not argue that the photograph is such a bad one that it deceives the viewer about the qualities of the sculpture (although this is certainly often the case with photographs) but, quite differently, that the properties of the sculpture as they are seen in the photograph are totally irrelevant to a critical appraisal of the work, simply because the photograph is flat. This, I maintain, is not merely false, it is absurd.
In order to understand how this sort of confusion has arisen it is important to consider the position from which these modern theorists believed it necessary to emancipate themselves. Some of the vehemence of their denial and contradiction of earlier theories is certainly attributable at least in part to the fact that they share with their enemies certain unquestioned assumptions about the theory of visual perception; and this has made it impossible for them to mark out as distinct a position for themselves as they would wish without falling into internal inconsistency or an intolerable betrayal of common sense.

The intellectual origins of the dispute are to be found in the well known Renaissance debate about the relative excellence of the several arts; and in particular in some of the answers given to Benedetto Varchi when he questioned the leading sculptors of his time on the matter. Cellini's view, for example, was:

I maintain that amongst all the arts based on design, sculpture is seven times the greatest, because a statue must have eight show sides and all should be equally good. Therefore it often happens that a sculptor lacking in love for his art is so satisfied with one beautiful side or perhaps two; and in order not to have the trouble of filing something from that one beautiful side, which he values above those six sides which are not beautiful, he leaves it with the result that...
statue will be devoid of harmony. For everyone who admires it, ten will criticize it, if after the first view they walk around it.¹

Or, perhaps even more clearly and emphatically, in the letter of 1547 as quoted in Goldwater and Treves' *Artists on Art*:

> These views are not only eight, but more than forty, because even if the figure be rotated no more than an inch, there will be some muscle showing too much, or not enough, so that each single piece of sculpture presents the greatest variety of aspects imaginable. And thus the artist finds himself compelled to do away with that gracefulness that he had achieved in the first view in order to harmonize it with all the others. This difficulty is so great that no figure has ever been known to look right from every direction.

This pictorial approach to sculpture (neglecting what seems now the rather sterile question which art is the greater) received its most complete expression and theoretical defence in the writing of Adolf von Hildebrand at the end of the nineteenth century.² The immediately relevant aspects of Hildebrand's doctrines will emerge clearly enough from the following extracts:

> ...both sculptor and painter have to deal with the relation existing between visual impressions and kinaesthetic ideas. The painter gives on a plane a visual impression of a three-dimensional form, while the sculptor forms something three-dimensional for the purpose of affording a plane visual impression.³

² *The Problem of Form in Painting and Sculpture* (American ed., 1907) was first published in German in 1893.
³ (1907) p.34.
And:

If, now, we apply the conception of relief more particularly to the representation of a figure in the round, this conception requires that the figure represented shall, from various aspects, satisfy the demands of relief — indeed, express itself as relief. This again means that the various aspects of the figure shall each present an intelligible picture as a plane layer. Our concern is, that the figure in each of its aspects shall excite the idea of a layer of space, and at the same time describe a total space clearly possessing unity of plane. In this manner the whole material content is metamorphosed into a visible form, and thus, in contrast with its real and solid form — a cast, as it were, of nature — becomes a pure perceptual form... Unified, from its principal points of view, in one common plane, the figure gives the same feeling of repose and visibility that we obtain in the case of a clear impression received at a distance... so that, even from near by, the appearance is that of a plane picture.

If the figure offers more than one plane picture, there will, of course, be more than one position from which to view it. The number of satisfactory aspects a work may have depends on the artist's conception; it may be two, front and rear, as in statues of a relief-like character; it may be three, or four, etc. It is the energy with which the work emphasizes these certain points of view, not their number, which interests us here. But among all the possible aspects there will always be one that dominates. This one is representative of the total plastic nature of the object, and, like a picture or relief, expresses it all in a single two-dimensional impression... The problem in a plastic ensemble consists in arranging a solid figure so that it can afford us such a picture.1

And finally:

1 pp.92-94.
But how can one speak of a variety of possible situations for a figure which is condemned to stand forth in empty space - in the middle of a square - just where no figure should be made to stand because of the fact that all aspects of it are given equal value? There is neither front nor rear, and the situation counteracts the pictorial effect of the figure. As the spectator circles about the statue he has at least four views to take in, and this can be to the advantage of only a very few works and of pleasure, in general, only with figures in the nude. When we ask the source of this superstitious regard for the center of the square, we can find only one answer. It is due to the uncultured mind which fancies an open square to be a sort of organic unity with which is associated a feeling of organic symmetry.\footnote{p.117.}

It is not surprising that a cry for sculpture that is fully in the round should sooner or later be heard, and theoretically defended; although the slogan 'in the round' has attracted a certain amount of pointed derision:

When negro sculpture first came to Paris, some five and thirty years ago, the dealer who launched it hoped to win us over by saying that no Greek masterpiece could hold up its head against it, and that it was in the round. This cry, that negro sculpture was in the round, you heard for a season at all the Paris dealers, and collectors, and in all the Paris social gatherings, and the next season everywhere in New York, and finally after a decent interval you read in luscious language in London dailies, weeklies, and monthlies, and heard at all London Luncheon parties and tea-tables: 'The great thing about negro sculpture is that it is in the round.' It occurred to nobody to ask the pioneer dealers and their disciples, the London critics and dilettanti: 'What of it? What if they are in the round?' And: 'What has their roundness to do with their being great works of art? Are not gasometers in the round,
and the enormous pipes that disfigure lovely subalpine valleys? 'Ah, but they are cylindrical', and no epithet could be more decisive, more magisterially final.¹

What is really at issue between the pictorial and the spatial schools (so to tag them) is not, in the end, an important matter of principle to do with the 'essential' nature of sculpture at all: it is no more than a matter of emphasis laid upon one set of aesthetic features rather than another. The more ancient party prefers - one should not say 'preferred', for the battle still rumbles inconclusively on - to seek in its sculpture mainly for pictorial effects; in Cellini's case as many as possible, in Hildebrand's relatively few but 'energetic'. The other party interests itself very little in pictorial effects but concentrates upon such spatial features as the complex turn of surfaces and the relationships of mass in three dimensions. This difference in attitude makes for a recognizably different kind of object, as one may easily confirm by comparing any work of, say, Carpeaux, with any work of Moore; and of course I do not refer to the connected but different difference between the more and the less naturalistic styles. But it is not true that every Carpeaux is without aesthetic features which are spatial, nor is it true that every Moore is without purely pictorial excellences. Indeed Moore's rightly celebrated photographs of his

¹ Bernard Berenson, Aesthetics and History (1950) p.45.
own work often seem to be taken with careful consideration for the aspect; while upon the strict theory to which he subscribes it should not matter in the slightest where the camera is placed so long as the direction and quality of light are not such as will result in a print which misleads a viewer about the solid form of the sculpture.

The partisans of the spatial school have, in general, taken it upon themselves not only to urge a certain kind of aesthetic preference, but to do so in part by seeking to show that other considerations, in particular pictorial considerations, are critically inadmissable. In this their efforts have been greatly hampered by the inconveniently common but unacknowledged theoretical ground that they share with their opponents. Ruskin mentioned only in a footnote that 'We see nothing but flat colours...'; and Hildebrand also relegates to the foot of the page the remark: 'The reader need hardly be reminded that our actual impression is twodimensional, a flat picture on the retina.'¹ Henry Moore makes a passing remark or two to the same effect, and while Read puts it boldly and explicitly into the main body of the text of his major treatise on sculpture he does not seem to consider it a theory, in need of defence, but a simple incontestable fact that (as already

¹ The Problem of Form, p.21.
quoted): 'If we merely "look at" sculpture...we get merely a two-dimensional impression of a three-dimensional object'.

Some at least of the spatialists' difficulties would be alleviated if they were to concede that what we see is what we see: that if we see a solid three dimensional object then it is a solid three dimensional object that we see, or of which we have a 'visual impression', and nothing two dimensional whatsoever - unless it be some flat part of that object. The peculiar difficulty that special faculties or insights must be postulated to permit a viewer to have knowledge of the spatial qualities of what he sees is removed by this eminently commonsensical move; but the utter defeat of the pictorialists would even so still be out of reach.

It would still be out of reach because of the point that has been brought out in previous chapters: that we give, and both naturally and rightly give, picture, model and facsimile accounts as well as object accounts of the three-dimensional things that we see.

* * * * *

All the main pieces of the puzzle are now laid out, and it is only needful to pick them up in such a way as to construct a coherent account of the appraisal of sculpture which, in contrast with those
of the principal embattled parties, does justice not merely to a preferred set but to all of the more conspicuous facts.

We look at a sculpture - and no 'synthetic realization' is necessary; only adequate eyesight cultivated by a normal education - and we say: 'What a flabby, bloated shape' or 'See how subtly the surfaces turn away from the nodal point'; and these are object accounts of what we see. They are manifestly aesthetic remarks as well, but aesthetic remarks which derive their sense and appropriateness from a true understanding of the actual three dimensional properties of the object. Or we say, looking at the sculpture: 'What a strong profile that has, like a drawn bow', or 'It looks uncomfortably top heavy from here'; and these are aesthetic remarks which are given point and sense by their acceptability as picture accounts. Sometimes, too, we give model or facsimile accounts of sculptures. We say of what is plainly a stonecarving: 'That's a man...a lion...' and so on. To say that it is a man is to say, upon the proposed analysis, that a man would be indistinguishable from it (or at any rate, very like it; the spectrum from illusionistic through naturalistic to symbolic representation is not easy to break decisively at any point). 'It is a man', said of a shaped stone, is in analogy with 'It is a small bright speck' said of a great star; although of course the 'small bright speck' is a picture and not a model or facsimile account. The analogy holds only as to the propriety, in both cases, of attaching the description to the object by the copula
'is'. 'It is cold stone' and 'It is a smiling man' may both be true of the same object; they are not competing accounts of what is seen, unless their authors choose to have them compete by arguing, both, that they are object accounts. 'It is an attendant' and 'No, it's a dummy' may well be competing opinions overheard in Madame Tussaud's; although they can be re-aligned out of competition: 'I know it's a dummy - I mean that it is an attendant and not, as you might mistakenly have supposed, a policeman'.

For the sake of symmetry, and because it solves an old problem neatly, it is worth pointing out how this conceptual apparatus enables one to deal with Bell's muddle about pictorial representation. Just as the more vehement spatialists of sculpture have tried to legislate against the admission of picture accounts in the criticism of sculpture, so there is a type of account of a naturalistic or illusionistic picture against which certain pictorial theorists have sought to legislate. A painting, they claim, is a two-dimensional object - a flat pattern. No remark which explicitly or implicitly treats it as having the properties of those three-dimensional objects which are represented in it can possibly bear critically upon the painting as a painting.

This view overlooks the natural right we have, which cannot be legislated away, to give perceptual accounts other than object accounts of paintings. An object account of a painting, of course, will inevitably be a 'flat pattern' account of two dimensional shapes
and colours - an account of how the painting is which is independent of any particular viewpoint. Now it is quite true that we do not often offer picture accounts of paintings. Indeed, it is not easy to think of a plausible occasion or reason to do so. 'That picture looks very narrow when seen from far to one side' would be an example, but hardly an example likely to occur in the course of ordinary art criticism, in view of our well established convention of enjoying paintings en face from a moderate range of distances.

No, the account of pictures which is given, on sight, as often, as naturally, and as properly as an object account of them, is not a picture account but a (three dimensional) model account. We say about a picture (or we don't say, because it is obvious): 'That is a house...a tree...a man'. In other words we offer a model which, we claim, would be sufficiently difficult to distinguish from the object actually in front of us to make it a testable matter whether what we say is true. That the model proposed is three dimensional and the object only two dimensional is a circumstance quite symmetrical with that which obtains when picture accounts of solid objects are given. There is one respect, however, in which the symmetry is awry; although it is a highly theoretical respect with only slight practical consequences from the point of view of art criticism. It is this: the geometry of central perspectival projection on to a perpendicular-planar surface happens to be such that an infinite range of suitable
models would match the pictorial object,\footnote{The 'Ames room', for example, can be constructed in countless ways.} whereas in any one cultural epoch or milieu\footnote{See the discussion of this point in the previous chapter.} only one (admittedly somewhat variable or flexible) flat image will be regarded as an acceptable picture match for given solid objects.

A tilted disc, for example, is picture-matched by an ellipse, and acceptably picture matched \textit{only} by an ellipse: but a picture ellipse may be matched by an enormous range of objects, including not only tilted discs and non-tilted ellipses but the most fantastical nameless shapes in surfaces of variable inclination to the perpendicular. Although of logical interest, this point has comparatively little practical significance in connection with representational painting, for although it is certainly possible to propose weird models which would match, say, a picture-cube (thus to beg the question of what account should be given of it), it is most natural to offer the model of a cube: and perhaps it is even more natural in the case of the pictured house, tree, or man. Anxiety about the apt model only arises where the picture seems, for one reason or another, to be naturalistically representational in character, and yet the objects represented are unfamiliar or else the conventions of representation vary conspicuously from an acceptably
naturalistic standard. In such cases we sometimes do not feel a sufficiently firm grasp of the situation to propose models with an easy confidence. This is a fact which has been exploited by such a (self-styled) 'metaphysical' painter as de Chirico, in order to evoke an eerie and unsettled mood in the spectator, who feels that he ought to be able to 'read' the natural model appropriate to the picture without difficulty because of one set of clues, but finds that he cannot because as many pointers contradict as are consistent. Such painting may be, in part, symbolic and not naturalistic at all; but it certainly owes much of its marvellous queerness to the way it both tempts and defies the giving of ordinary model accounts.

Returning to the case of sculpture, it will help to clarify and to some extent to summarize the points that have been made in a number of different ways and places throughout this thesis, if they are put together in terms of a concrete example of aesthetic appraisal. The Moschophoros (frontispiece) was referred to as a paradigm case of sculpture, and a paradigm case of aesthetically sensitive appraisal might be the passage concerning it written by the late Humfrey Payne.\(^1\) I shall quote the entire passage, in order that the authentic feel of it may be communicated (if this is not the criticism of sculpture,

\(^1\) In the Introduction to *Archaic Marble Sculpture from the Acropolis* (1950) pp.1-3.
then what is?); and then examine it in terms of the notions that have been developed here for the analysis of just such talk:

The Moschophoros is not a single statue but a group: a group which is not simply a combination of two figures, but a composition the elements of which are inseparably fused. It is, perhaps, the first example of its kind in Greek sculpture. The motive - man with calf or ram on shoulder - is older, even in Greece, than this statue, and it has a long history; but it is hard to find a version in which the relation between the figures is more finely expressed. The peculiar character of the statue is, in part at least, due to one unusual feature of the composition - the locking of arms and legs, like harness, across the man's chest. An obvious device, certainly, but one which is not to be found in any of the other versions of the subject; its effect on the composition may be appreciated if the Moschophoros be compared with a figure such as that in the Barracco collection, or with the early Cretan statuette in Berlin. 1

The relation between man and calf is emphasized in other ways. The calf is not, as often, held horizontally: it has settled down comfortably on the man's shoulders, with the weight on its hindquarters, the contour of the back (interrupted only by the projecting thigh bone) slanting easily away to the right. To bind the figures together the sculptor has made the tail fall neither vertical, nor parallel to the division of the haunches, but along the centre of the man's left arm...so that it is fully visible, and therefore fully effective, in front view. Again, as though to accentuate their connection, the calf's head is not vertical, but tilted slightly towards the man's. In all these respects, as in many others, the Cretan statuette just quoted provides a striking contrast. There the man and the ram which he is carrying certainly imply each other, but

1 Winter, Kunstgeschichte in Bildern, pl.233,3.
2 Neugebar, Kat. pl.19, no.158; Lamb, Greek and Roman Bronzes, pl.25b.
only in a general sense. The relation is limited to the requirements of the subject: it has not really permeated the design.

The calf and the cloak tend to obscure the form of the man's figure: think these away, and it becomes apparent that the Moschophoros stands early in the series of sixth-century men. The shoulders are immensely broad, the chest narrows rapidly to an extremely narrow waist, and from the level of the navel the contour falls in a bold unbroken arc until it reaches the knee, giving great breadth to the hips and thighs. The main lines of the figure (though not, of course, the modelling) are even reminiscent of the Sunium kouroi. In profile, despite the breaks, it is clear that the thighs were massive, like those of a figure on some very early black-figure vase.

The forms (for example in the face, chest, shoulders and arms) are admirably conceived in simple convex surfaces, rather like a landscape of compact and open downs. The minor division of the body, such as those of the stomach or knee, are treated with reserve, and here and there one recognizes a device familiar to an earlier period, a low ridge used to define an area (the arch of the stomach, the navel, the borders of the cloak). The same reserve is to be seen in the modelling of the face: the harshness of the earliest phase of Attic sculpture has been overcome; traces of it only in the grooves which bound the nostrils, and in the region of the mouth. Above all the head is no longer dominated by the long vertical contours and flat converging planes of the Sunium style, and of the Berlin goddess. The rectangular - or rather cubical - structure of these earlier heads is still apparent, but it is modified: for the sculptor of the Moschophoros has a feeling for convexity which is something new in the history of Attic sculpture; he is, in fact, the first Attic sculptor to whom working in three dimensions means working in the round. The warmth and intensity of the man's expression make a vivid contrast with the passivity of the calf - a contrast once heightened by the inlaying of the pupils of the man's eyes with coloured glass. How brilliant the effect must have been one may imagine from a later statue...where the glass is still partially preserved.
There are two respects in which this passage is a little less than ideally exemplary for present purposes: although perhaps only an artificially contrived sample would be satisfactory - suspiciously so - in each last detail. First of all there is the concern shown, quite properly by a Director of the British School of Archaeology in Athens, for the correct placing of the group in a historical sequence which will establish reliable dates. This interest is not in itself aesthetic, although it overlaps with a concern for the proper understanding of the culture-contextual background against which the sculpture must be seen for certain of its aesthetic qualities to be fully appreciated. And secondly, it does not contain any very explicit aesthetic verdict. The aesthetic remarks which are most verdict-like, although they are by no means paradigmatic, are:

... but it is hard to find a version in which the relation between the figures is more finely expressed.

And:

... admirably conceived in simple convex surfaces...

One would have preferred more exemplary verdicts such as 'In this magnificent work...', or 'Amongst the finest examples of...'. Indeed, one would have preferred an example each of a genetic, an open and a consequential verdict, one pro and one con for each case:¹ but to ask so much of a single uncontrived specimen of aesthetic appraisal would

¹ See Chapter V.
be unrealistic. Payne's verdict is, of course, in a general way, quite clearly implicit in his treatment of this sculpture, both in his text and in the relative size and number of his chosen illustrations. His appraisal is restrained and scholarly, and he no doubt considered it unnecessary to make emotive, performative or predictive moves about a work that is already so secure in general public esteem.

There are plenty of aesthetic remarks, however, in spite of a restraint of expression that verges on the ascetic. (The emphasis laid upon what seem to be amongst the more telling words or phrases is my own):

...a composition the elements of which are inseparably fused.

...slanting easily away to the right.

The same reserve is to be seen in the modelling of the face: the harshness of the earliest phase of Attic sculpture has been overcome;...

...a bold unbroken arc....

The warmth and intensity of the man's expression make a vivid contrast with the passivity of the calf...

How brilliant the effect must have been...

And many others in varying shades of prominence, including whole sentences which, although they contain no conspicuously aesthetic words or phrases, would nevertheless not be uttered except by a person of taste engaged in drawing attention to features of aesthetic importance. It may seem that many of Payne's remarks are simply
descriptive, yet it is pertinent to ask why he chooses to describe that which he describes, and not other aspects of the work. The answer, if I am right, is that an exercise of aesthetic sensibility is involved in choosing the material for mention, however apparently neutral the terms in which it is mentioned. And of course the reservation must be inserted here that his aims are divided: that in part his choice of matter is made as an historian, and not altogether as aesthetic commentator. Again, it will only be possible to offer very pure illustrations of all aspects of the thesis at once, if we invent them.

Amongst the aesthetic remarks that are made, honorific originality\(^1\) is attributed to the work, as seen in relation to its historical and cultural context:

It is, perhaps, the first example of its kind in Greek sculpture...due to one unusual feature of the composition - the locking of arms and legs, like harness, across the man's chest.

And

...for the sculptor of the Moschophoros has a feeling for convexity which is something new in the history of Attic sculpture; he is, in fact, the first Attic sculptor to whom working in three dimensions means working in the round.

There are many occasions upon which a point is made or a description given in terms of a facsimile account of the sculpture.

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\(^1\) See Chapters III to V, esp. V.
In fact, whenever Payne speaks of 'the calf...', 'the man...' we must regard these as facsimile accounts of the marble carving if we are not to have our noses rubbed in the contradictions readily generated by a stubborn insistence that 'It is marble' and 'It is a man' are both object accounts of the thing described. These could, of course, be regarded not as facsimile accounts but as model accounts; and indeed would have to be so treated if the object had not been a sculpture in the round but, say, a shallow relief. The facsimile may be regarded, in such a situation, as no more than a particular case of the model, and it may be an unsetttable and unimportant question which account has been given on many occasions. That it is neither an object nor a picture account is all that may be unequivocally clear.

There are, in this passage, several picture accounts of the sculpture, which at the same time are, or internally embody, aesthetic remarks:

...the contour of the back (interrupted only by the projecting thigh bone) slanting easily away to the right.

And:

The shoulders are immensely broad, the chest narrows rapidly to an extremely narrow waist, and from the level of the navel the contour falls in a bold unbroken arc until it reaches the knee, giving great breadth to the hips and thighs.

But object accounts, spatialists will be relieved to notice, are not lacking:
The forms (for example in the face, chest, shoulders and arms) are admirably conceived in simple convex surfaces, rather like a landscape of compact and open downs.

And:

The rectangular - or rather cubical - structure of these earlier heads is still apparent, but it is modified: for the sculptor of the Moschophoros has a feeling for convexity which is something new in the history of Attic sculpture...

It is characteristic of sustained passages of appraisal and criticism such as this, written without any doctrinaire aesthetic theory in mind, that the words and phrases work together in a most complex way; so that it seems almost intolerably clumsy to try to assign a single distinct and specific aesthetic role to each one in turn, as one might parse a sentence. A phrase might be a picture account, part of an aesthetic remark, a component of an attribution of either an intrinsic or a contextual property, and perhaps (a matter not touched upon here, but of fearsome complexity) a metaphor or some other figure as well. The easy mastery of such discourse is a little like the capacity to walk downstairs - one knows very well how only so long as one does not think about it too directly. And just as capable steppers may be ignorant of neurology, physiology and the theory of dynamics, so sensitive and cultivated persons who are effective critics of the arts may be quite unable to comment upon their own practice in such terms as this thesis has sought to elucidate.
On the other hand, an adequate grasp of the character and relatedness of the several components of an activity so complex as aesthetic appraisal can hardly fail to save a bad critic from some of his more egregious errors. Whoever insists, for example, that the fact that a piece of sculpture looks *alarmingly unstable from here* must be totally irrelevant to the critical assessment of the sculpture (because a picture account and not an object account is given) is simply wrong: unless, that is, his claim is not really to be taken seriously in its overtly theoretical pretensions, but only as covertly rhetorical. If he is ready to admit: 'Yes, it *does* look topheavy from just here, but I don't think that's anything like so important a consideration as the fact that it...', and so on, then he may well be a perceptive enough observer and a capable critic, although by now a self-confessed partisan in a battle of preferences.

At this point one may wish to say, echoing Kant, that there is no disputing about matters of taste - provided it is well enough understood that although it may be a matter of taste which aesthetic considerations are, in a given situation, influential upon a given critic, it is not at all a matter of taste but a matter of eminently disputable fact which *are* the aesthetic considerations in that situation. I have argued, amongst other things, that if a sculpture has, from some point of view, a taut or a delicate profile (for example), then this is an aesthetic consideration no less than that it has (for example) a vigorous spatial movement. I have not
argued - for it is not arguable - that a critic must be impressed by such a consideration; any more than that he must enjoy garlic in his food once he is persuaded that garlic is an edible vegetable widely employed as a seasoning.
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