

- ⁵ Translated into German as *Vom Erkennen des literarischen Kunstwerkes*, Tübingen: 1968.
⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 1.
⁷ See the selected bibliography of his works in the fourth edition of his *Das literarische Kunstwerk*, pp. 429-32.
⁸ Ingarden wrote: "In 1953 Hartmann's book *Ästhetik* appeared, which bases the work of art completely on the notion of 'strata' introduced by me in 1931. However, in the process of his research, Hartmann changes this notion and thus makes many other strata of which I would not approve". ("O estetyce filozoficznej", *Studia z estetyki*, III, p. 12.)
⁹ Translated into Italian in 1968; into Czech in 1967; and portions of it into Russian in 1957.
¹⁰ Parts of this were translated into English as *Time and Modes of Being*, Springfield, Mass: 1964.
¹¹ This assumption becomes true provided the term "to exist" is understood in a special, very narrow sense.
¹² I attempted to show the results of epistemological research on a psychological basis in *Psycho-physiological Theory of Cognition and its Criticism*, 1931.

In this lecture I shall be concerned mainly with the differentiation of artistic and aesthetic values. With this in view it will be necessary for me to make various other distinctions: first that between the work of art and the aesthetic object, and also a distinction between an aesthetically valuable quality on the one hand and value and its further determinations on the other. These distinctions have been elaborated in my various writings on aesthetics and theory of art, beginning with the book *Das literarische Kunstwerk* (1931),² but I shall here try to take further than before the differentiation between artistic and aesthetic values.

In contrasting the work of art and the aesthetic object I shall omit for the sake of brevity discussion of the manner in which the work of art exists, whether as a real object or in some other way. But I will mention shortly the question whether a work of art is a physical object having a specific form or whether it is rather something which is constructed on the basis of a physical object as an entirely new creation brought into being by the creative activity of the artist. The essence of this activity consists of specific acts of consciousness in an artist, but these invariably manifest themselves in certain physical operations directed by the artist's creative will which bring into being or transform a certain physical object – the material – bestowing upon it that form whereby it becomes the existential substrate of the work of art itself, for example a work of literature or music, a picture, a piece of architecture, etc., and at the same time assuring to it relative durability and accessibility to a multiplicity of observers. Nevertheless in its structure and properties a work of art always extends beyond its material substrate, the real "thing" which ontologically supports it, although the properties of the substrate are not irrelevant to the properties of the work of art which depends upon it. The work of art is the true object to the formation of which the creative acts of the artist are directed, while the fashioning of its existential substrate is a subsidiary operation ancillary to the work of art itself which is to be brought into being by the artist.

Every work of art of whatever kind has the distinguishing feature that it is not the sort of thing which is completely determined in every respect by the primary level varieties of its qualities, in other words it contains within itself characteristic lacunae in definition, areas of indeterminateness: it is a schematic creation. Furthermore not all its determinants, components

or qualities are in a state of actuality, but some of them are potential only. In consequence of this a work of art requires an agent existing outside itself, that is an observer, in order – as I express it – to render it *concrete*. Through his co-creative activity in appreciation the observer sets himself as is commonly said to “interpret” the work or, as I prefer to say, to reconstruct it in its effective characteristics, and in doing this as it were under the influence of suggestions coming from the work itself he fills out its schematic structure, plenishing at least in part the areas of indeterminacy and actualizing various elements which are as yet only in a state of potentiality. In this way there comes about what I have called a “concretion” of the work of art. The work of art then, is the product of the intentional activities of an artist; the *concretion* of the work is not only the reconstruction thanks to the activity of an observer of what was effectively present in the work, but also a completion of the work and the actualization of its moments of potentiality. It is thus in a way the common product of artist and observer. In the nature of things a concretion goes beyond the schematic structure of a work of art, but at the same time it is – or at any rate it can be – that for the emergence of which the work serves or rather that in which the work achieves its full and complete image – or at any rate a more complete image than in any likeness which is at variance with the work itself. Empirically a work is always manifested to an observer in some concretion. But this does not prevent the observer’s trying to apprehend the work in its pure schematic structure together with all its characteristic potentialities. But this mode of apprehending a work of art demands a special attitude and exertions in the observer if he is to withhold himself from all arbitrary completion of qualitative indeterminacies while at the same time taking full account of the special character of its every moment of potentiality. Such apprehension of a work of art is rather rare and is not realized in the everyday “consumer’s” attitude in his commerce with works of art.

As the joint product of artist and observer a concretion will differ to a greater or less extent from one instance to another, but the nature and extent of the variations depend both on the character of the work (particularly the type of art to which it belongs) and on the competence of the observer as also on the empirical nature of his observation and the particular conditions in which it takes place. There are two possible ways in which a work of art may be perceived. The act of perception may occur within the context of the aesthetic attitude in the pursuit of aesthetic experience or it may be performed in the service of some extra-aesthetic preoccupation such as that of scientific research or a simple consumer’s concern, either with the object of obtaining the maximum of pleasure from commerce with the work or – as frequently happens in the reading of literature – with the object of informing oneself about the vicissitudes of

the characters depicted in the work or some other matter of extra-literary fact about which a reader can obtain information on the basis of the work of art (as for example by reading Homer classical scholars seek to inform themselves about the life of the ancient Greeks, their customs, dress, etc.).

Within the context of both attitudes either of two perceptive aims may predominate. Either the observer will seek in commerce with the work to realize the concretion most authentic to it or this will not be a matter of particular concern or he may even seek to give free rein to phantasy and up to a point to concretize the work in accordance with personal whim (for example a stage manager). If a concretion occurs within the aesthetic attitude, there emerges what I call an aesthetic object. This object will resemble or be congenial to what was present to the mind of the artist when creating the work if the concretion is carried through with the endeavour to conform to the effective characteristics of the work and to respect the indications it gives as to the limits of permitted fulfilment. But even if he tries to remain true to the work itself, the aesthetic object actually produced by the observer often differs in many details of articulation from what is permitted or – if one may use the term – demanded by the work itself. Because of this the basic character of the whole is changed or at the least a mass of details will conflict in different reconstructions of the same work of art – which is one source of quarrels and controversy. To every work of art there pertains a limited number of *possible* aesthetic objects – possible in various senses: In the broad sense we are concerned with concretions which are achieved genuinely within the context of an aesthetic attitude taken up by the observer but without consideration whether the effective reconstruction is faithful to the work of art or whether the plenishing and actualization of its moments of potentiality accord with its effective aspects, or to some extent deviate from it. In the narrower sense we speak of possible aesthetic objects only where both the concretions of a given work involve faithful reconstructions of it and also the plenishing of the work and the actualization of its moments of potentiality lie within the boundaries indicated by its effective qualities. These concretions may still differ among themselves in various respects because a work of art always admits of diverse ways in which its areas of indeterminacy may be filled out and completed: some of these plenishings harmonize better and some worse with the fully articulated moments of the work and with the rest of the implementations of its indeterminacies.

The effective emergence of the “possible” concretions of a work of art – in either of the above senses of the word – obviously depends not only on the work itself but also on the presence of competent observers and on its being apprehended by them in one way rather than another. This in turn

depends on various historical conditions. Hence any work of art (and this operates differently for the different arts) passes through various periods of brilliance, that is periods in which it attracts frequent and correct aesthetic concretions, and other periods when its attractiveness is weakened or even disappears if it is no longer "legible" to its public. Or again it may meet with observers who have a completely different manner of emotional reaction, who have become insensitive to certain values of the work or frankly hostile to them, and who therefore are unqualified to produce the sort of concretion in which these values shine forth and act upon the observer. When this happens a work of art is not only unreadable but as it were dumb.

The alternate periods of brilliance and obscurity and the variations in the number of potential observers which are bound up with them – the fact that at different times one and the same work of art appears in differently moded concretions and that it changes as it were its features and lineaments, loses its power of acting upon observers and is able only imperfectly to display its potential values – all this explains why the theory of the relativity and subjectivity of aesthetic and artistic values is so popular and seems so plausible. The sense of the words "subjective" and "relative" in this context depends on the nature of the philosophic background against which they are intended to be understood. I cannot go more closely into this matter here but in connection with the question whether or in what sense the theory may be entertained I would like to suggest certain preliminary considerations. The first step is the distinction between a work of art and an aesthetic object and the next is the differentiation of artistically valuable from aesthetically valuable qualities. Without these distinctions it is impossible to reach agreement about the subjectivity or relativity of aesthetic (or artistic) values.

There exists, however, a sense of "subjective" – usually not formulated precisely – in which the theory of the subjectivity of aesthetic (or artistic) values ought to be rejected outright, despite its popularity. This is the view that the value of a work of art (or an aesthetic object, which is usually confused with it) is nothing else but pleasure (or in the case of negative value disagreeableness) understood as a specific psychical state or experience, lived through by an observer in contact with a given work of art. The greater the pleasure he obtains the greater the value the observer attributes to the work of art. In truth, however, on this theory the work of art possesses no value. The observer indeed announces his pleasure by "valuing" the work of art, but strictly speaking he is valuing his own pleasure: his pleasure is valuable to him and this he uncritically transfers to the work of art which arouses his pleasure. But the same work evokes different pleasures in different subjects or perhaps none at all and even in one and the same subject it may evoke different pleasure at different

times. Hence the so-called value of the work of art would be not merely subjective but relative to the observer and his states. The relativity of the value of a work of art so understood is a simple consequence of its subjectivity in the foregoing sense.

He who would embrace the theory so elucidated has in his support the obvious fact that some works of art cause us pleasure, a pleasure which may vary with the circumstances, and others either do not evoke pleasure or may even cause displeasure of one sort or another. This fact, banal as it is, admits of no doubt – as also the other fact that in general people prize their pleasures and shun what is disagreeable. Acknowledging this fact we would only complain at the failure to recognize the *kind* of pleasure which is imparted to us by works of art and how its varieties are related to the varieties of value inherent in the work of art. By recognizing that these pleasures have a special character of their own and exist in a different manner from the pleasures deriving from a good meal or fresh air or a good bath we should carry our affair a little forward although it would contribute nothing to the question whether or how values inhere in works of art themselves. For it seems certain that these pleasures, being either actual states of mind or qualities of mental states and experiences, are not included in the work of art or tied to it. But if these pleasures constituted the sole value which is manifested in our commerce with works of art, it would not be possible to attribute value to the work itself. For the pleasure remains entirely outside the work of art. The work is something which transcends the sphere of our experiences and their contents, it is something completely transcendent in relation to ourselves. And the same can be said of the aesthetic objects constructed on its basis. It is precisely in the sphere of the work of art and its concretions, a sphere beyond that of our experiences and their content, that we must look to see whether it is or is not possible to find something which can be recognized as specifically and truly valuable.

Neither can this value be found in the work of art itself (or in its aesthetic concretion) so long as it is conceived as a kind of reflection of the instrumental value attributed to the work on account of the several pleasures which we experience in contact with it, or if the work of art is treated as a tool for evoking this or that sensation of delight. The experiencing of such pleasures is of course often the occasion for their appearing to the experiencing subject as a delusive mirage of value in the work of art. It is especially with naive people who, lacking education in the arts, are particularly susceptible to their emotional influences, that this kind of delusion arises, and for this reason those of little experience are inclined to be carried away by enthusiasm for works of art which lack genuine value. The emergence of such mirages of value is not identical with genuine worth, whether artistic or aesthetic, and cannot provide an

argument that value depends solely on this type of reflected pleasures and is therefore subjective or relative. The value of a work of art is not to be sought in such qualities but can be expected to be found only in some self-subsistent characteristic.

As regards the instrumental values of works of art as tools for arousing pleasures and delights in those who observe them, this kind of value can be attributed but only in a derivative sense as a consequence of the fact that states of pleasure are themselves valuable for the subject, not in the sense that the work of art is itself endowed with some attribute and strictly speaking without regard to the attributes it has. This derivative type of value is usually ascribed to tools in almost complete disregard for the nature and structure of the object they are used to produce. If the consumer is subjected to an emotionally pleasant influence from a certain work, this is enough for him to attribute to the source of his delight the instrumental value of a tool causing that delight. This instrumental value is obviously relational: by virtue of its determination as a value type such value is related on the one hand to the object which serves as tool and on the other hand to the effect for which the tool serves. The stamp or seal of this value lies wholly in its relation to the quite different, non-relational value ascribed to the delight or pleasure. Moreover, the value of an instrument is relative in another sense too: it is in its very occurrence dependent and mutable, changing its qualitative determination according to the nature and the value of whatever the tool serves to produce. And finally it is dependent on the observer and the state in which he happens to be at a given moment. When an observer ceases to react emotionally to it or is no longer sensitive to it as a work of art, so far as it is treated as an instrument of enjoyment, it is not valued by him either positively or negatively but becomes an object of indifference. But the work of art itself undergoes no change in its properties during these modifications of subjective mood and response. It remains something finished, complete for itself, through the changing forms of contract, unaffected by the multiform appreciations of different observers. Yet those values or value qualities which I am here searching for are able to manifest themselves to the observer only at the moment when the latter achieves some apprehension of the work itself, even though a partial and as yet imperfect one, when his commerce with the work achieves an unveiling of the intrinsic features of the work (features which seldom obtrude themselves at first contact), and when an apprehension of its structure and properties enables him to descry its essential values, those which are peculiar to any work, which give witness and in fact are the evidence for its claim to be a work of artistic value. The observer must of course succeed in achieving this apprehension and appreciative commerce: if his skill in perceiving or responding to the work is fallacious,

neither its properties nor its values will reveal themselves to him. But this does not mean that the work is then deprived of value, only that the observer is in one way or another inefficient – either through a general lack of artistic culture or because he is unequipped or at that particular moment unable to appreciate the particular work.

This is to say, if we are seeking what I want to call the ‘artistic value’ of a work of art, it must conform to the following requirements:

- (1.) It is neither a part nor an aspect of any of our empirical experiences or mental states during commerce with a work of art and therefore does not belong to the category of pleasure or enjoyment.
- (2.) It is not something attributed to the work in virtue of being regarded as an instrument for arousing this or that form of pleasure.
- (3.) It reveals itself as a specific characteristic of the work itself.
- (4.) It exists if and only if the necessary conditions for its existence are present in the qualities of the work itself.
- (5.) It is such a thing that its presence causes the work of art to partake of an entirely special form of being distinct from all other cultural products.

In other words, if any object lacks this thing which I here call artistic value, it ceases in consequence to be a work of art. If on the other hand it appears in its negative form – as an imperfection rather than a merit – then the work is to some degree abortive, i.e. it can only be counted as a work of art at all if some positive values (that is values in the narrower, and strictly correct, sense of the word) are manifested in addition to negative ones.

It behoves now to indicate some examples of this kind of value. But first I must distinguish between qualities (i.e. determinants of value) which are valuable in the artistic or aesthetic or moral sense and a value which appears in an object as a necessary consequence of its possessing a particular aggregate of valuable qualities in a given category. In other words, value emerges on the foundation of a specific aggregate of valuable qualities and it is dependent *inter alia* on this aggregation both for the degree of its value and for its type. Values differ from one another only in virtue of having their specific determinants and qualifying properties. Some of these qualities determine the general type of value (i.e. whether it is aesthetic or moral or economic or utilitarian), while others determine the specific variety within the general type, as for example “beauty”, “prettiness” or “ugliness” within the general range of aesthetic values. And to these variants within a general type belongs what I have called the “degree” or “elevation” of any value. As will be seen, we are confronted with many different distinctions and it is only by analysing

them and elaborating them in detail that it is possible to make any progress in the little studied field of general theory of value. The examples to follow will enable readers to grasp what I intend when I speak for instance of qualities as opposed to values themselves and their closer determinations (or qualities of value).

For the moment we will simply state. *Artistic value* – if we are to acknowledge its existence at all – is something which arises in the work of art itself and has its existential ground in that. *Aesthetic value* is something which manifests itself only in the aesthetic object and as a particular moment which determines the character of the whole. The ground of aesthetic value consists of a certain aggregation of aesthetically valuable qualities, and they in turn rest upon the basis of a certain aggregate of properties which render possible their emergence in an object. Both the one and the other kind of value assumed the existence of a complete work of art (or aesthetic object). It is not important here how the constitution of both types of object has been arrived at. What is indubitable is the fact that for the constitution of an aesthetic object the co-creative activity of an observer is necessary and therefore several aesthetic objects may emerge on the basis of one and the same work of art and that these may differ among themselves in their aesthetic value. But, as has been said, this is not an argument in support of the subjectivity of that value. This genetic way of considering the whole matter cannot be repudiated or disparaged and yet it is not this which is decisive as to the existential character of aesthetic values themselves.

Irrespective of what its origin may be and the part taken by the observer in constituting it, the aesthetic object in the moment of being constituted is something with which the observer is in direct contact however he may apprehend it or respond to it. And for all that this object is something standing in relation to the observer and his experiences, it is at the same time transcendent (a separate self-subsistent whole) just as much as is the work of art or any other existentially independent natural object which exists of its own right. This transcendence extends not only to those properties of a work of art or aesthetic object which are neutral in point of value but also to its valuable qualities and to the values which are constituted on their basis.

We will now return to the work of art. We distinguish two aspects, aspects which are neutral as regards value and those which are axiologically potent, using the latter term to cover both valuable qualities and the values themselves and their particular determinations.

To the first category belong primarily those attributes which determine the type of art with which we have to do, whether it is a work of literature, painting, music, etc. So, for example, a work of literature is a construct of multiple strata and has a quasi-temporal structure, since its parts follow

one another in temporal sequence, and this enables it to present events in the time of its presented world. A painting is not quasi-temporal in this sense, i.e. its parts do not follow each other in sequence, and therefore if a painting is representational it can only present a single incident at a particular moment of occurrence. On the other hand, unlike a literary work, a painting is characterized by two or three dimensional extension in visual space. A literary work is first and foremost a linguistic construct. Its basic structure comprises a twofold linguistic stratification: on the one hand the layer of phonemes and linguistic sound-phenomena; on the other hand the meanings of the words and sentences, in virtue of which the higher-level units of meaning emerge and from them the representational content of the work and the aspects in which the subject matter is presented. Although a painting lacks the dual stratification of language, it has its own proper means of presenting aspects of objects and through the objects presented and the manner of their representation may be constructed higher-level elements such as situation or narrative. All the features which belong in a painting to the representation of the actual world are absent to non-figurative painting; and still another situation with regard to the axiologically indifferent features of a work of art arises in connection with music or architecture.

Besides these axiologically neutral features which determine the basic type of a work of art, there occur in all types of art other axiologically neutral features which together combine to constitute an artistic "individual" in its absolute uniqueness. Thus in a literary work there are completely determinate sentences arranged in a definite order possessing an established sense and precise syntactical formation. These are composed of words which possess a fixed sound and which belong to a given language and are chosen out of the vocabulary of that language in such a way as to create an individual linguistic style peculiar to the author or even to the particular work. There are many other axiologically neutral properties, all of which, together with the general features which determine its type, form what I shall call the axiologically neutral skeleton of the work, without which the work would not exist as just this unique work of art and no other. It is clear, however, that this skeleton does not constitute the whole work of art and that irrespective of whether we are concerned with it in its purely schematic form or with one of its concretions. Despite their axiological neutrality the features which belong to the skeleton of a work are not without bearing for a whole range of axiologically significant features. On the contrary, so long as the skeleton is appropriately endowed, its properties lead to the emergence of entirely new features which belong just as intimately to the work of art but differ in that they are axiologically significant, artistically valuable qualities which emerge in this or that aggregation and endow the work

with various artistic values. They are basically of two kinds: there are those which are allied to the excellences or defects of "artistic craftsmanship" – that is virtues of artistic technique – and next there are various sorts of competence possessed by a work of art in virtue of its having certain properties and components and not others. We will first give examples.

In a literary work the individual sentences may be simple or complex, their structure may be paratactic or hypotactic. Such features are in themselves axiologically neutral and belong to the axiologically neutral skeleton of the work. Similarly when we find in one work a preponderance of nouns and in another of verbs, or a preponderance of general, abstract names in one while another is so constructed that even intricate concepts are expressed through names of particular things. We do not attach value to such features in themselves. But if we say of a sentence (irrespective of whether it is simple or compound) that it is clear and transparent in structure while another is intricate in a sense which precludes clarity, or if we say that it is obscure or incomprehensible, we are in such case indicating characteristic features of the sentences which are not artistically indifferent. They are, or at any rate they may be, valuable and particularly so if their occurrence is no longer sporadic or if a casual occurrence is not justified by the manner in which the sentence is used or the situation in which it occurs. When obscure sentences become a mass phenomenon which cannot be explained by the necessity of using such sentences in order to express certain objective situations or to evoke a certain artistic effect (by which we mean something not indifferent as regards aesthetic value), then we are alleging, whether for the work as a whole or for certain parts of it, characteristics which carry positive or negative significance for its artistic value. There may, of course, be various sources for the obscurity of particular sentences or of a text, but – with the exception of one case which will be mentioned later – unclarity, obscurity, unintelligibility are a defect in a given sentence or work while lucidity, clarity of expression and precision of construction are a virtue. These properties of linguistic components then become value qualities characterizing the literary work itself. (It might be objected that this is not a matter of artistic value but simply a value of a general natural kind which appears when the work is not purely an artistic creation but, for example, has a scientific aim as well. But all we are concerned with at the moment is the fact that it is an emergent feature of the work positively or negatively significant in regard to value.) In the field of literary art this lucidity (or its opposite), occurring along with other similar value qualities, may acquire a special character, a special role in the structured organic whole which is the work of art, and harmonizing with other artistic value qualities it may induce the emergence of new features of value either in the work of art or

in its concretions. Indeed, the above-mentioned features of sentences or of the language generally may entail some properties of the presented world in a given work. If the language is unclear, ambiguous, difficult to understand, then the presented objects take on a characteristic imprecision. Both particular details and the relations between them become blurred in their outlines; one might say that their constitution becomes incompletely articulated, disorganized, and does not give a clear impression of the thing presented.

Obscurity, imprecision, partial or complete unintelligibility, and the like, are not only blemishes in themselves but are signs of bad workmanship, defects of literary technique, betraying inadequate mastery of language or ineptitude in its employment. Such shortcomings in the creative powers of an author bring in their train blemishes in the work which is the fruit of his activity and these blemishes in their turn constitute a negative value in the work of art.

Of course the above negative value-characteristics of sentences or whole sentence-aggregates may on occasion be introduced into a literary work of set purpose by the author. But when this is done the purpose must be apparent from the work itself. Vagueness in the meaning of a sentence may be utilized for some artistic effect; or the feature of a badly constructed and defective sentence may form part of the presented material of the work, being spoken or written by one of the characters in it. In this way an author could represent the incompetence of an inexperienced writer whose vicissitudes form the theme of his book. In these circumstances obscurity is not a defect of the work itself but a feature of one of the objects represented in the work, a feature which is directly shown instead of being indirectly described. Obscurity in a sentence or some larger section of a work may be intentional, lastly, for the sake of contrast in order that the contrary virtues of the remainder may be enhanced to greater prominence the more vaguely, clumsily or otherwise defectively those parts are constructed which function merely to serve as contrast. In such case defectiveness is merely a means of reinforcing merits which otherwise might not strike us. Intentional faultiness which fulfils a special function within the work as a whole is not evidence of any lack of literary skill in a writer and is not a technical fault in the work itself. On the contrary, it is a sign of technical skill; it is as it were a simulation of unskilfulness whose purpose is the better to display technical proficiency and craftsmanship in the art product.

By analogy certain regional features of composition of a work, whether literature, music or painting, are in themselves axiologically neutral properties of the organic structural whole and can be indicated by a purely objective analysis of the work. For example such and such a disposition of the parts, whether serially or in spatial order, a particular

way of arranging the elements of one part of a whole so as to contrast with the freer or looser dissemination of elements in other parts of the same work – are structural features in themselves neutral as regards value. One may affirm their presence in a work quite objectively without any implied judgement of value. But these structural properties again, in themselves neutral in respect of value, may entail other properties which do have a positive or negative value significance. For example a too harmonious arrangement of details or parts may reveal itself as an excess of pedantry, over-much solicitude for creating the impression of orderliness which becomes obtrusive in its uniformity; a certain affectation in ascribing a predominant role to compositional qualities as if correctness of composition were sufficient of itself to determine the final value of a work of art. A certain type of perfection in composition when it goes along with perceptible defects of another kind, that is of content, becomes a source of monotony, tediousness and so on. Compositional irregularity which serves no obviously intended artistic purpose in the work is a plain defect, upsetting the balance of forces within the whole. Again it may be evidence of inexperience in the author, a technical shortcoming in the work, which has negative value as such irrespective of what negative value qualities it entails. On the other hand it may happen that in a particular work disorder in the composition may be seen on the basis of the other qualities of the work to be intentional and to fulfil definite functions within the whole. It does not cease thereby to be disorder but its role as a factor of disvalue may nevertheless ultimately conduce to the emergence of a moment of positive value in the organic whole. It may, but it need not. For the fact that a certain irregularity of composition was intended does not of itself guarantee that the intention was correct or that it was successfully realized so that in the final outcome it gave rise to some positive value in the structure of the whole. For example the narration of the fortunes of the characters in a novel may not accord with the temporal sequence of the events – a well known and frequently used technique of novelists. One may doubt, however, whether this device as used for example by Aldous Huxley really conduces to the intended artistically valuable effect. In this connection, in order to discover whether a certain aspect of a work has positive or negative value it is not enough to examine the value characteristics of that aspect in isolation; it is necessary to extend one's survey to the whole work, since various qualities of this kind may, and sometimes must, exercise a mutual influence on each other in regard to their value characteristics and it is only in the whole organic unity of the work (where both its neutral and its value-significant features are taken into account) that their final form is revealed. This is in agreement with the earlier statement that the real function of artistically valuable moments is revealed only on the basis of an appreciation of the

work, which is not possible so long as we confine ourselves to the enjoyment of these or the other empirical pleasures mediated by it.

To give one more example of an artistic value quality I will refer to features of certain of Rodin's sculptures in marble. What strikes us in them is the extraordinary precision and at the same time the softness in the working of the surfaces, reproducing the softness of a woman's body represented by the statue. This method of working the surface of the marble plays here an essential role in the function of representing an object – a woman's body – different in character from the material from which the sculpture is formed in such a way that the observer is to some extent put under the impression that he is in visual contact not with marble but with human flesh. This is an artistic function, and its virtue consists in the skilful representation of an object whose qualities are basically unlike the material of the sculpture. But this skill is not the only merit here, not the only artistic value in the work. The perfection which consists in technical mastery displayed in the shaping of the surface of the stone may also contribute something of artistic value to a work, something detectable in the work itself and not to be identified with any subjective experience or psychological state of admiration or pleasure. Indeed admiration presupposes that we have successfully apprehended the feature of which I am speaking in the work itself and is something separate, superadded to what is visibly present in the work.

One could multiply examples of artistic values and disvalues at will. One might speak for instance of the unsuitably chosen material of some works of art – e.g. the neo-Gothic university buildings at Chicago made of concrete instead of stone – or we might contrast "noble" baroque with one which is cheap and tawdry, overloaded with ornament. But I believe that the examples I have already given will be sufficient to indicate what I have in mind when I speak of artistically valuable qualities in a work of art, though it would be less easy to convey a correct notion of qualities of this kind or that of the artistic value quality whose notion emerges on their basis as their final resultant. I will therefore now proceed to give in contrast some examples of *aesthetic* value qualities, positive and negative, leading on to the exemplification and determination of aesthetic value and its potential varieties.

A very great variety of aesthetically valuable qualities is exhibited in constituted aesthetic objects. All of them are characterized by being something given directly to perception, or if one prefers the expression they are directly presented phenomena not something indirectly deducible from other data or something whose existence can only be inferred on the basis of the apprehension of the whole work. They are concretely present to experience. In order that aesthetically valuable qualities may be constituted, an aesthetic experience must be achieved

since it is only in this kind of experience that these qualities come to realization. (The difficulty of distinguishing them from artistically valuable qualities may lie partly in the fact that it does not seem impossible that some of the properties which we have treated as artistically valuable qualities may also enter into experience—as valuable—within the context of a given aesthetic object. In such cases do we have to do with artistically valuable or aesthetically valuable qualities? But to avoid complicating the matter in advance I will proceed to give a certain number of examples.)

There first come to mind various emotional qualities such as those suggested by the expressions “sad”, “threatening”, “serene”, “festive”, “sublime”, “pathetic”, “dramatic”, “tragic”, etc. But there also, such qualities as, in contrast with the foregoing, one might call intellectual, as for example “witty”, “clever”, “acute”, “interesting”, “profound”, “boring”, “dull”, “trite”, “pedestrian” and so on. There are also aspects of a formal character, such as uniformity and variety, harmony and disharmony, awkwardness, compactness, coherence, expressiveness, dynamism, and so on. Another class are “artificial”, “affected”, “natural”, “simple and unaffected”, “exaggerated”, “genuine”, “false”, “insincere”, “lacking in integrity”, and so on.

We may distinguish these qualities into two main types: (1) those which are aesthetically valuable in a positive or negative sense both in themselves (when they emerge in an aesthetic object) and also when they are associated with other qualities of this class; (2) qualities which are in themselves neutral as regards aesthetic value but which acquire an aesthetic value when they are exhibited in association with other aesthetically valuable qualities. We call the first type unconditionally valuable and the second conditionally valuable (aesthetically), although even the former are not entirely independent of the context in which they are manifested. To the class of conditional aesthetic values belong at least some of the emotional qualities. If someone is sad in everyday life on account of some grievous loss, this sadness which imposes itself on his ordinary life-experience is aesthetically neutral. But the character of sadness which arises for example in the music of Chopin, a sadness be it noted which is uniquely produced by musical means, is in a given work (that is in a particular performance and audition, i.e. an aesthetic concretion) indubitably a feature relevant to aesthetic value, an element in the complete set of determinant qualities of a given work (e.g. *Étude* Op. 25, No. 7). Similarly the dramatic tension of some quotidian human conflict may be entirely devoid of aesthetic value, but in the *Revolutionary Study* (Op. 10, No. 12) such dramatic tension is an aesthetically valuable feature. On the other hand the qualities which we name by such words as “solemn”, “profound”, “tedious”, or

“banal”, belong to the category of unconditionally aesthetically valuable qualities. Why it is that approximately the same emotional quality at one time has an aesthetic value and another time has none, constitutes a vast theme in itself connected on the one hand with the unique function of the aesthetic experience by which the aesthetic object is brought into being and on the other hand with a peculiar modification which characterizes the mode of existence of the content of an aesthetic object—matters which I have tried to elucidate elsewhere but which are too complex to deal with here.

The question which aesthetically valuable qualities can co-exist in a single aesthetic object in such a way as not to diminish but strengthen their own valuableness while leading to other higher-level qualities which are themselves aesthetic value determinants; which qualities are mutually exclusive or bring about a diminution or conflict of qualities; which finally exert a mutual attenuation in respect of aesthetic value—these are matters whose theoretical analysis has barely been begun. Their investigation must begin with analysis designed to clarify this or that particular aesthetically valuable quality by bringing about their intuitive elucidation, more particularly as the names we generally use to refer to them are for the most part ambiguous and too vague. This kind of research is likely to succeed only when we make constant use of concrete examples of works of art, or their corresponding aesthetic objects, where we have reached agreement that a specific quality is manifested in them and are at the same time in a position to point to some allied qualities which are exhibited in combination with different sets of associated qualities so that we can directly grasp the way in which particular qualities are modified in accordance with their context. There is no doubt that the practical study of possible (and necessary) relations among aesthetically valuable qualities has existed for a very long time in art. Every truly creative artist, musician, poet, painter, etc., in creating new works carries out certain experiments in this field. In composing his work the artist as it were sees ahead by creative intuition into possible complexes of aesthetically valuable qualities and how they will conduce to the emergence of an over-all aesthetic value in the work as a whole. At the same time he tries to find the technical means to realize a particular complex by his choice of those aesthetically neutral qualities (colours, sounds, shapes, etc.) which, by forming the skeleton of a work, create the objective conditions (i.e. those on the side of the work of art) necessary for the realization of the subjective conditions, that is the existence of a suitable observer and the achievement of an aesthetic experience, without which neither these neutral qualities could be exhibited nor the aesthetically valuable qualities which together cause the emergence of a particular complex of qualities and the constitution

of a corresponding aesthetic value determined by this whole complex substrate.

It will be apparent from what has been said that aesthetic value, made concrete on the basis of a given work of art, is nothing else but a particular quality determination marked by a selection of interacting aesthetically valuable qualities which manifest themselves on the basis of the neutral skeleton of a work of art reconstructed by a competent observer.

Notes

Lecture read to The British Society of Aesthetics, 6th November 1963 (Ed.).

¹ Cf. *Das literarische Kunstwerk*, § 25 and *O poznawaniu dzieła literackiego* (The cognition of a literary work of art), § 24: also in English "Aesthetic Experience and Aesthetic Object", *Journal of Philosophical and Phenomenological Research*, 21/1961, no. 3 and in this volume.

Aesthetic Experience and Aesthetic Object

I

The difference between the cognitive perception of a real object and the aesthetic experience of an aesthetic object.

The essential mistake of the views about an aesthetic experience consists in the opinion that the object of such an experience is *identical* with an element of the real world and the object of our activities or cognition. There are, indeed, some circumstances which seem to justify this opinion. May it not happen that we lift the window-blinds in our room some day in spring and catch the sight of the garden where the trees have opened into flower during the night? We are suddenly dazzled and fascinated by the sight of apple trees abloom against the background of a fair sky. Are we not pleased with some real objects, which we find in the surrounding world, the same objects which we had seen before having experienced the feeling of ecstasy, and which we continue to see in spite of the fact that the wave of feeling and enchantment has passed away? And is it otherwise – we may be asked by someone – when we enter, for example, the rooms of the Louvre and see at once the perspective of several rooms at the end of which there appears against a dark background the snow-white Venus of Milo in all her wonderful slenderness and charm? Is it not just a piece of stone of a particular shape that we are pleased with and that our enthusiasm is directed to? The fact that this piece of stone is the work of an artist does not seem to alter, by any means, its reality (and to exclude the object we are pleased with from being studied by someone assuming a purely investigating attitude, e.g., when measuring the particular dimensions of the statue, testing the condition of the marble surface, etc.).

The facts mentioned do occur, indeed; nevertheless the theory suggested on their basis seems to be faulty. It is, namely, true that in cases similar to those described we *begin* with the perception of a real object. But the question is, first, whether, when starting from a real object, we remain within its limits while an aesthetic perception is taking place in ourselves, and, secondly, whether the starting from a real object is indispensable in every case of aesthetic perception.

The possibility of purely fictitious objects, which are devised by ourselves and by no means perceived, being the objects of aesthetic