

# AESTHETIC EMOTIONS AND THE ETHICS OF AUTHENTICITY

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Aesthetics has generated thorny and contentious problems for philosophy going back to its earliest roots in ancient Greek culture. Plato held little esteem for art, since in his mind it stands at two removes from reality, being the imitation of the visible world, which is itself an imitation of the world of the Forms. Moreover, insofar as art tends to arouse the emotions—or at least the wrong ones—it was irrational and to be repudiated. His pupil, Aristotle, took a somewhat more sensible approach, seeing art, especially tragic performances (and likely comic ones as well, though we possess only small fragments of his writings on this topic) as useful in training the public how to correctly engage emotions, an essential element in his ethical theory. The role of emotions has been of special interest in aesthetics even up to the contemporary era. In one of the more influential aesthetic theories of the last century, and still heavily anthologized today, Clive Bell offered that what distinguished the perception of true artworks is that they elicit from perceivers a particular kind of emotion namely, the *aesthetic emotion*, as he called it.<sup>1</sup> Without denying that emotions regularly, perhaps always, play some role in our interactions with works of art, Bell's critics have noted that his theory failed to give any satisfactory account of just what an aesthetic emotion itself is, what, aside from being elicited by an artwork, made an emotion aesthetic such that it could be truly distinguished from "regular" emotions.<sup>2</sup>

Bell's basic hypothesis is in fact slightly more involved, founded on two reciprocal claims; on the one hand, as just mentioned, all and only works of art provoke an "aesthetic emotion"; no two works will produce an identical emotion, but the emotions any two true artworks do produce will be aesthetic not "ordinary"—whatever that would be by contrast.<sup>3</sup> In other words, aesthetic emotion is a completely new breed of emotion, wholly different in kind from the ordinary emotions of the day-to-day. Bell does not have in mind that some ordinary emotions are occasionally experi-

enced as having an aesthetic quality; he is clear to state that aesthetic emotions have nothing whatsoever to do with the emotions of everyday life, they neither percolate up from daily concerns nor redirect us to back to that life.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, Bell speculated further that if it were possible to examine all such works which provoke an aesthetic emotion, it would be possible to determine at least a single common element which each and every work possessed that could account for the provocation of this alleged aesthetic emotion in the viewer. That single common element Bell called "significant form," and he held it to be present in any work of visual art in which the lines, shapes, colors, textures, and so on were so related as to embody significant form and thus rouse one's aesthetic emotions. Thus only works that provoke aesthetic emotions by embodying significant form count as true works of art.

But despite the *prima facie* objectivity of this latter criterion it is ultimately reducible to the subject's idiosyncratic dispositions. Subjectivism of this sort has perennially plagued aesthetics. Bell recognized his vulnerability to such criticism, stating that, "it may be objected that I am making aesthetics a purely subjective business, since my only data are personal experiences of a particular emotion . . . that the objects that provoke this emotion vary with each individual, and that therefore a system of aesthetics can have no objective validity."<sup>5</sup> As the first section of this essay will show, Bell's response to this charge is to come down with both feet firmly on the side of subjectivity, and in so doing not only does he not explain the relation between the elements of the work and the purported objective presence of significant form, he also fails to account both for how it is that the subject comes to recognize it in those cases, and how the subject then gets from that moment of consciousness to the moment of the alleged aesthetic emotion. Exactly how significant form's presence in a work sets off an aesthetic emotion is left entirely unexplained. As an alternative, I will offer Husserl's doctrine of intentionality, which I believe can account for

the relation between perceiving subject and perceived object, the move from this stratum of consciousness to the stratum of the experienced emotion, as well as the differences in perception and appreciation of the same object by different perceivers (or the same perceiver at different times) and hence the differences in the significance that arises as a result of the perceptual encounter.

Yet Bell's theory also suffers from an overly simplistic view of the work of art itself. Though he is right to acknowledge the fact that the same work of art can evoke widely different responses, his only resources for explaining this phenomenon are the supposed objective presence of significant form in the work and the subjective experience of aesthetic emotions in the viewer, but as it turns out, Bell cannot show how significant form is a truly objective property of the work, since it can only ever be said to be actually present in a work in cases when a viewer actually undergoes an aesthetic emotion. Therefore, in the next section I will introduce Ingarden's useful distinction between the artistic object and the aesthetic object, which he develops out of Husserl's doctrine of intentionality. Interestingly, Ingarden posits what he calls a "preliminary aesthetic emotion." Though Ingarden's use of this term at times runs dangerously close to suggesting a mysterious, occult emotion like the one Bell posits, I do not believe Ingarden intends this term in the same reckless fashion Bell does. And so to help clarify the difference we will also look at Dufrenne's distinction between feelings and emotions which I think clarifies Ingarden's basic point but also rounds it out more fully.

Ingarden also deploys the notion of *concretion* to explain the relationship between the intending of the physical substrate of the work of art as perceived and the strata of intentionality in which the physical substrate's indeterminacies are filled out, constituted aesthetically, and valued: Taken together, these can account for evaluative differences of the same work of art, the emergence of alternate aesthetic experiences. Concretion is an essential part of the aesthetic experience, the experience of an *aesthetic* versus an *artistic* object, and as such concretion is more than mere perceptual skill. Although Bell acknowledges that keen perception of works is a matter of some training,

he has, nonetheless, a thin, generic view of perception. In addition, Bell seems to have an equally generic view of the emotions. As I will argue in the third section of this essay, these are major liabilities, for not only is one's sense of *meaningful* form, color, texture and so on, funded by the *Lebenswelt* in which one finds oneself, so too is one's sense of the range and proper deployment of one's emotions, and this would hold even if there were some such thing as an aesthetic emotion in Bell's sense. I will briefly look, therefore, at the role of the *Lebenswelt* for aesthetic experience. This is a critical piece of the puzzle, for in the final section I will turn to the implications of aesthetic experience for ethics, where one's lifeworld also exerts great influence. Building on the previous sections and borrowing from Drummond's development of a Husserlian ethics of authenticity, I aim to make a Husserlian case for the ethical import of aesthetic experience in which a proper understanding of the emotions is central.

### **Bell's Aesthetic Hypothesis in Light of Husserlian Intentionality**

Perhaps the primary difficulty confronting every aesthetic theory is accounting for both the objectivity of the work of art and the subjective appreciation of the work with equal satisfaction and without reducing one to the other. Clearly, common general agreement on the objective features of a work of art does not guarantee a similar consensus regarding the merit of the work. As I have already indicated, Bell attempts to explain this problem by suggesting that only works possessive of significant form have merit. Three points are noteworthy here.

First, no work failing to possess significant form is entitled to be considered a work of *art*; it may be pleasing and well-crafted, but it is not art. This is problematic since this means that, given simultaneous perceivers of the same work, only one of whom actually perceives significant form in the work, that work must be understood as both being and not-being a work of art at exactly the same time, a wholly unsatisfying conclusion. Second, this first observation suggests that significant form may not be an objective property of a work at all—at least not in the sense that line, shape, texture, and color are objective properties. Instead, sig-

nificant form indicates a valuational commitment on the part of the perceiver who “gets it” since the objective form—the features of the physical substrate—of the work may well be agreed to be the same, while its *significance* for each of our perceivers varies. This indicates the third upshot, namely, that a distinction needs to be made between this objective substrate and the valued object to which it gives rise. This last point will be the focus of the following section, but to get there we must first examine how these first two factors can be addressed from the Husserlian doctrine of intentionality.

While it is as a result of encountering such objective compositional elements that one supposedly recognizes significant form and therefore experiences an aesthetic emotion, nevertheless Bell contends that:

Any system of aesthetics which pretends to be based on some *objective* truth is so palpably ridiculous as not to be worth discussing. We have no other means of recognizing a work of art than our feeling for it. . . . I have no right to consider anything a work of art to which I cannot react emotionally; and I have no right to look for the essential quality in anything that I have not *felt* to be a work of art.<sup>6</sup>

Ultimately, concludes Bell, “All systems of aesthetics must be based on personal experience—that is to say, *they must be subjective*.”<sup>7</sup> Of course no one could seriously deny the essentiality to aesthetics of an account of objectivity—after all, it is our experience of objects of art toward which even Bell’s theory is directed. Bell’s psychologistic approach inhibits his ability to adequately account for the work of art since its essential feature, significant form, is reduced to the subjective states of the viewer.

By contrast, Husserl offers a rich account of consciousness, presented primarily through the doctrine of intentionality. By intentionality is meant the directed and constitutive or sense-bestowing character of acts of consciousness; objects of consciousness are meant or intended, while the acts themselves are intentional, or meaning-bestowing. To understand the structures of intentionality, one must reflectively leave the naïveté of the natural attitude in which one more or less uncritically

conducts one’s day-to-day life, and performing the phenomenological reduction or *epoché* does this. The idea is to bracket one’s tacit belief in the existence of the natural world, to put it out of play, so as to examine consciousness free of the presuppositions of the natural attitude as best as one can. For instance, in examining a perceived object, one must not naively assume that a painting, say, has an absolute, external existence and causally influences one’s sense organs, but rather one must focus on the structure of the act of the perception-consciousness as such in order to examine the perceived painting as it is given to consciousness. Unlike Cartesian hyperbolic doubt, which negates its object, the Husserlian methodic “doubt” of the epoché merely neutralizes the index of belief in the object, that is, the truth or falsity of the belief in the object’s existence. I suspend my participation in beliefs characteristic of the natural attitude without thereby negating the object itself; it remains for me, but only as something upon which I reflect and not something I am, as it were, *living*. By so doing, I discover the essential features of, for instance, acts of perception-consciousness that underwrite the understanding of *this* particular act of perceiving *this* painting.

As with perception, so other acts of consciousness, or *noeses*, have an essentially intentional structure as well. The objects they intend, or *noema*, need not be “real” (i.e., physical, external) objects; anytime I experience an object, “real” or not, however, I experience a “what” with sortal properties so that the experience of any particular object is also the experience of an essence connected to the object’s being. An object’s essence can itself be taken as an object, but this does not mean that an essence is an *actuality*; it is an ideality but no less an *object* for all that; it simply happens to be an ideality-object. The insight that this eidetic reduction can also be applied to acts of consciousness, Husserl believes, reveals “*that consciousness has, in itself, a being of its own which in its own absolute essence, is not touched by the phenomenological exclusion*.”<sup>8</sup> Thus, when the epoché is performed, “what remains behind is the pure act-process with its own essence.”<sup>9</sup>

But this is not to be mistaken for a subjectivist move, for, as Husserl is clear to state, “The ray of attention presents itself as emanating

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from the pure Ego and terminating in that which is objective. . . . The 'Object' is struck; it is the target, it is put into a relation to the Ego (and by the Ego itself) *but it is not 'subjective.'*"<sup>10</sup> Though what is left behind is consciousness as pure act-process and its essence, it is the essence of consciousness that it is not single-barreled, but double-barreled. That is to say, "there is an extraordinary two-sidedness in the essence of the sphere of mental processes, of which we can also say that in mental processes there is to be distinguished a *subjectively oriented* side and an *objectively oriented* side."<sup>11</sup> Still, it may be objected that an "objectively oriented side" of consciousness is nevertheless *consciousness*, hence subjectivity, and not an object as such. To see how this is not simply a modified Berkeleyanism it must be observed that consciousness is always consciousness *of* some object, which is to say that intentionality always has a correlated intentional object with corresponding noematic correlates.

All acts of consciousness are by nature intentional, and so *constitute*, which is not to say create, their objects by intending them. Through its intentionality the noesis bestows sense on its object, or noema, precisely by virtue of being an essential kind of intentionality (i.e., perceptual, liking, valuing, memorial, phantasy, etc.) with really inherent moments, for example hyletic moments, whereas the noema and its correlates are not inherent moments of the noesis. Intentionality does not create its objects even though those objects are unities of sense "related to certain concatenations of absolute, of pure consciousness which, by virtue of their *essence* bestow sense," because this relation neither means "changing all the world into a subjective illusion," nor taking anything away from the objects themselves save an inappropriate "*philosophical* absolutizing" of them.<sup>12</sup> Rather, insofar as the ego fixes the object in its gaze, the noesis harbors sense and only thereby can the noema exist as such, yet, as Brainard notes, this is not to say that the noetic lived experience can exist independent of its noema, but means that just as the noema depends on the noesis for its Being, so too the noesis depends on its intentional object, the noema, for its being.<sup>13</sup> All of which is to say that reflection reveals that objects are not mere subjective

creations, yet they are always given to consciousness with a sense and never absolutely.

For Husserl, an absolute object is a counter-sense for to be an object implies being so for some consciousness (just as being a subject implies objects for that consciousness); thus, any object is an object of consciousness, and specifically an object of a certain kind of consciousness, therefore an object with a certain kind of sense. Husserl's point is that objects apart from any consciousness simply have no meaning of themselves: They gain their sense under the constitutive ray of intentionality, though by now it should be clear that this does not mean that the object may come to mean anything the consciousness wants it to mean. For the object retains an integrity of its own by virtue of its noematic correlates, while consciousness for its part is restricted by eidetic laws which prescribe the range of possible sense-bestowals based on the possible kinds of intendings of the object.

No stream of consciousness is ever purely one-dimensional, however, but is always richly stratified. Partly this is due to the fact that many intentional acts are hierarchically founded, that is, they presuppose other lower level intentional acts in the way a founded judgment of a painting presupposes a perception of that painting as its founding. It should go without saying that insofar as aesthetics cannot be reduced to mere perception it is always to be explained by higher order founded intentionalities and never by first order founding intentionalities. Despite the fact that in such higher order acts "*a number of noeses are built up on one another,*" these acts nonetheless represent "*the unity of a concrete mental process . . . in which, accordingly the noematic correlates are likewise founded.*"<sup>14</sup> Each noematic level up the hierarchy is an objectivation of the data of the previous lower level.<sup>15</sup> Yet despite the complex layers of founded acts, consciousness always "gets" the original object of the founding stratum because the ray of regard "goes straight through the noemata of the sequence of levels—until it arrives at the *Object of the ultimate level*" where it fixes.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, by shifting its focus, the regard can advert from one level to another to reflect upon the data of any given stratum; it is not forced to go all the way to the



original object in every instance, though even in advertent to a particular noema of another level the original object remains within the unity of the concrete mental process and thus close by and open to the ego's regard.

This points to the second important reason why the stream of consciousness is multi-dimensional. It is because intentionality extends even to the inactional periphery of actional lived experiences. Showing his indebtedness to William James, Husserl contends there is always a halo or periphery, or what James referred to as a margin or *fringe*, vaguely informing the attended-to object.<sup>17</sup> Every actional object of regard, in other words, "has its horizon of unregarded mental processes" and this "horizon of inattention" is "in the background with relative differences of clarity and obscurity as well as salientness and lack of salientness."<sup>18</sup> The halo is crucial to understanding consciousness, and especially so for explaining how two consciousnesses can intend the same "real" object and yet take from it quite different significance.

Taking our example of a perception of a painting, further eidetic possibilities beyond the founding intentional act, *perceived painting as perceived*, "are rooted" in this halo of the "marginally noticed" such that this horizon of inattention is as important as the object of pure regard. For its correlates form much of the fullness of the sense of the object by forming the objective background against which it is situated (both the perceived physical environment of the "real" painting and the "mental" associations to which the painting potentially gives rise) and from which it is plucked out by the ray of regard.<sup>19</sup> So although, as a mental process, perception has an "inner ownness" which is identical in every perceiver's act of perceiving, obviously no two acts of perception are identical because "perception itself changes according to change in determinedness of the surroundings,"<sup>20</sup> and furthermore there are "not two mental processes which, in addition, have a 'halo' absolutely alike."<sup>21</sup> When added to the understanding that "every mental process influences the (bright or dark) halo of further mental processes,"<sup>22</sup> we begin to see why it may rightly be said that for Husserl, the aesthetician will need to be more than merely a connoisseur of artworks, she will need to be, in a quite profound sense, a con-

noisseur of consciousness as well. Armed with both of these hard-earned skills, one is equipped to see the distinction Bell misses between the artistic object and the aesthetic object.

### Intentionality, Artistic Objects, and Aesthetic Objects

As we recently noted, all aesthetic engagement is for Husserl a founded species of positing—that is, it is built on other, more primal positings. As such it is a noetic moment added on over and above other noetic moments; this of course requires that there is also added on to the full noema another noematic moment as well, thus adding a new dimension to the full noematic sense. This basic insight is exceptionally rich in its implications, foremost among which is that an aesthetic object is not reducible to an artistic object. The doctrine of intentionality suggests that intuition broadly construed includes eidetic as well as sensual intuitions, which means that intuition harbors a kind of essential or eidetic necessity while still allowing for presentive intuition to occur in highly complex arrays.<sup>23</sup> Among the most complex are aesthetic intuitions.

Because Bell has such an impoverished understanding of consciousness the entire aesthetic experience as he conceives it is grossly simplified and thus creates more questions than it provides answers. As I suggested previously, significant form is a valuational object, not a perceptual object, yet for Bell it is grasped by simple perception. Since "pure form," as Bell also refers to it, is not a means to anything except the peculiar aesthetic emotion,<sup>24</sup> the only thing left to provoke this emotion once pure form has been stripped of all its significance and associations with ordinary life is "the thing in itself" or "ultimate reality."<sup>25</sup> Significant form then is form behind which we glimpse ultimate reality. Bafflingly, significant form has an entirely different ontological status, and thus by its mere perception, catapults the perceiver into an alternate realm. This is problematic on a number of levels, not the least of which is that Bell's "thing in itself" amounts to what Husserl calls an absolute object, which as we have already seen, he rejects out of hand as being a fruitless and untenable doctrine. Equally problematic is the question

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of just how mere perception is able to access such an ultimate object. Clearly, Bell is here not only presupposing some kind of Platonic distinction between two sorts of objects, namely, the “real” artifact and the “ultimate thing” behind it, unlike Plato he is also presupposing that this ultimate substrate can be accessed by mere perception. He offers no explanation as to how perception achieves this feat, however.

The inadequacy of this approach notwithstanding, Bell’s hunch that the object proper to aesthetic experience is something more than the sheer artifact has merit. Ingarden expresses this key distinction by noting that “nevertheless in its structure and properties a work of art always extends beyond its material substrate, the real ‘thing’ which ontologically supports it.”<sup>26</sup> This is so because sense perception as a founding act, the proper object of which is the mere artifact as perceived, is solely a basis for further acts built over it which lead to an aesthetic experience by virtue of intending an aesthetic object, where “the object of aesthetic experience is not identical with any real object.”<sup>27</sup> The apprehending subject moves beyond the schematic work of art itself, the “real” object, and in a creative way completes it.<sup>28</sup> This is possible and in fact necessary because not all the determinants of the artifact are in a state of actuality; many of them are potential only and require a participant-observer to render them concrete by supplementing the schematic structure by “plenishing at least in part the areas of indeterminacy and actualizing various elements which are as yet only in a state of potentiality.”<sup>29</sup> Incidentally, the explanation why the same “real” object perceived will be interpreted differently from perceiver to perceiver may be suggested here. Partly, as Mohanty has observed, albeit primarily in the context of language, meaning is not, for Husserl, the grasping and inspection of a subsistent entity dwelling within an expression.<sup>30</sup> A work’s meaning is never constituted, so to speak, “up front.” But also it is partly that each perceiver actualizes these potentialities differently and thereby constitutes a different aesthetic object from the same artistic substrate.<sup>31</sup> This process Ingarden calls *concretion*, and like any intentionality, though it has an essential structure, the fruit it bears may vary widely dependent upon the character of the work itself, the competence of

the participant-observer, and the empirical factors of his observation, including the given conditions of the environment (both external and internal) under which the participant-observation takes place, many of which make up the halo or objective background.<sup>32</sup> When concretion of the artistic work occurs within the aesthetic attitude, the artistic object is left behind and an aesthetic object emerges.<sup>33</sup> This object, though not “real”—that is to say, not the perceptible painting or music or dancers’ movements *merely*—is nevertheless an object, a noema with noematic correlates proper to it, for its emergence or constitution is the result of a particular stratified synthetic intentionality.

Constitution of an aesthetic object occurs when sense perception presents a quality in the artistic work, which prompts the perceiver to adopt an aesthetic attitude by triggering what Ingarden calls a preliminary aesthetic emotion (or sometimes, just a preliminary emotion) which opens the process of an aesthetic experience. This preliminary emotion “is not that of ‘being pleased with’” but is rather a vague indeterminate excitement that soon transforms into desire for further satiation of what the initial vague excitement promises.<sup>34</sup> As such, this preliminary emotion is not strictly speaking an emotion in the normal sense; this becomes clear from some of Ingarden’s comments, such as when he peculiarly notes that “the preliminary emotion undoubtedly includes an emotional element.”<sup>35</sup> More accurately it is characterized as “*dynamism—eagerness for satiation,*” or a stirring up by a certain provocative quality that is not yet accompanied by a “direct, intuitive intercourse with it.”<sup>36</sup> In other words, some unique quality has provoked in us a desire, “a form of falling in love (of ‘eros’),” that is, it provokes us erotically but has not yet ravished us.<sup>37</sup> To this extent at least it is obvious that Ingarden does not have the same thing in mind as Bell’s aesthetic emotion.

Since the preliminary aesthetic emotion’s essential function is simply to effect a shift from the natural attitude of practical life to an aesthetic attitude,<sup>38</sup> it may not be clear at first in what sense it remains helpful to refer to this cue of the aesthetic attitude as an emotion. The quality of being “preliminary” seems to be the distinguishing feature of Ingarden’s concept and is useful for understanding more precisely the process of concretion, specifically this

shift of attitude from the quotidian to the intending of aesthetic values. But by its very nature this shift suggests that while still in the quotidian attitude one has a premonition, the promise of aesthetic value to be had if only she will redirect her intentionality to an aesthetic modality. Ingarden notes that at the preliminary arousal to the aesthetic attitude, the participant-observer “begins to *sense rather than see* certain aesthetically significant qualities” suggested by, but not present in, the artistic (hence, not yet the aesthetic) work.<sup>39</sup> It is this sense, that there is aesthetic value (which is the determining moment of the aesthetic object)<sup>40</sup> to be had if one adopts the aesthetic attitude and constitutes an aesthetic object, that Ingarden’s concept gets at, but how does this qualify it as an emotion?

Ingarden’s reference to falling in love is especially keen. Love, like many emotions—fear, for example—is highly anticipatory in nature. While one feels love in the beloved’s embrace, as every adolescent knows, it is the interminable longing for the beloved when he or she is not present that we most refer to when we say we have fallen in love. Similarly, fear is always its worst before its object has arrived, at which point, it often passes over to sheer terror or panic, or, in the case of false fears, into tranquility. But, like false fears, love can have a thwarted intentional object as well. I remember all too well a college romance, which unexpectedly turned south. It had been a nine-month whirlwind, almost dreamlike in perfection; I thought this was the one. She was away in Mexico the last three weeks of the summer, and on the day she was to return I had an out of town excursion to make late in the day. I waited to leave until the very last minute and then another half hour, all the while thinking I simply wouldn’t make it if we didn’t see each other before I had to leave. The lovesick anticipation was literally maddening. When I finally saw her car pull up, I could see in her face and in her body language that something was terribly wrong. It was. The brief couple of minutes together were among the most painful I’d ever experienced; she was cold and indifferent for no apparent reason. A couple of days later she broke things off for good.

Why was this experience so shocking? Well, I was in love with her of course, but more than that I had been living with an incredibly

intense anticipation of her return, and it turned out that that anticipation was horribly misplaced, though there was no reason I should have known that in advance of actually seeing her. It is just this sense that there is something valuable to be had that makes falling in love so overwhelming. The point is that emotions like love and fear (and some others) are preliminary in the sense that without their intentional objects yet being present, there is nonetheless already an implicit recognition of value at play and this recognition underlies the anticipatory desire for further satiation (think, for example, of how we continue to court our fears once they have been aroused, even though our saner selves may take them to be irrational). I take it that this is what Ingarden has in mind in describing the preliminary aesthetic emotion.

In this connection, Mikel Dufrenne offers a useful distinction between feeling and emotion that helps unpack Ingarden’s notion of a preliminary aesthetic emotion. Dufrenne’s notion of feeling is connected to his notion of the *expression* of the aesthetic object.<sup>41</sup> In other words, it is not *what* the artwork presents that is vital for the constitution of an aesthetic object, but rather the *way* it presents itself; that is, what is crucial for an aesthetic object is its expression. Feeling, then, is that in the participant-observer that communes with this expression, as distinct from the emotions that may also subsequently be aroused. The expressiveness of an aesthetic object is not, however, measured by the emotions it provokes.<sup>42</sup> Like Ingarden’s preliminary aesthetic emotion, feeling relates to a certain quality of the object through which the object manifests its intimacy and points toward the depth of its being, and thus it similarly implies the adoption of a new attitude on the part of the subject.<sup>43</sup>

Whereas Ingarden moves from the preliminary aesthetic emotion at the initial stage of an aesthetic experience to aesthetically imbued (neutralized) ordinary emotions throughout that experience, Dufrenne suggests that the process moves from feeling to emotion, holding that “the immediate element in feeling . . . is not feeling in its entirety. Authentic feeling is a new immediacy,” and therefore “feeling has a noetic function. It reveals a world. Only when this world has been given can emotion begin to interpret it—either in order to transform it . . . or else . . . to engage in a valid ac-

tion.”<sup>44</sup> This last phrase may seem a bit peculiar. What Dufrenne has in mind is that the emotions proper “denote *movements* in the strict sense of e-motions,” not simply as internal alterations of the subject but equally as beginnings of outward action, whereas feelings denote *knowledge* even if only “that peculiar spark of knowledge which unleashes the emotions and enters into a circle with them.”<sup>45</sup> One might call this, as Rosa Slegers usefully puts it, “felt knowledge.”<sup>46</sup> Elsewhere, Dufrenne offers that feeling is a kind of knowledge in the sense that it is the reading of the expression of the aesthetic object, adding that, “To know (*connaître*) is in this case truly to occasion a mutual birth (*co-naître*).”<sup>47</sup>

Dufrenne’s revision of Ingarden on this point seems to me imminently sensible if for no other reason than because “preliminary aesthetic emotion” sounds so unlike a felt emotion that it tends more toward obfuscation than illumination; though Ingarden provides a respectable account of it, nevertheless, on the level of nomenclature, the distinction between emotion and preliminary emotion suffers a similar confusion as Bell’s articulation. On the other hand, capturing this distinction through the introduction of feeling as another, but related, stratum of emotionally tinged—or fringed, haloed—intentionality more clearly articulates the complex stratification of the process from founding perception to aesthetic experience by highlighting this phase of a preliminary and proleptic sense that aesthetic value is to be had before the process of concretion in the aesthetic attitude has gotten fully underway. Feeling, as Dufrenne characterizes it, is just this sort of vague knowing. So, far from being a “mysterious emotion” or a “curious mental and emotional power”<sup>48</sup> hurling one toward ultimate reality (in fact it seems to me to point quite obviously to the straightforwardly simple hypothetical-inferential nature of all thought),<sup>49</sup> this approach has the advantage of avoiding both equivocation and mystification by clarifying the distinction between our ordinary emotions and the feelings with which we receive an aesthetic object’s expression. As a species of anticipation, feeling, as it were, scouts the halo for clues to the sort of expression that is to be given, and reports back so that the proper emotional response may be ready to go.

To take Dufrenne’s example, the emotion of fear is not the feeling of the horrible, nor is the emotion of merriment the feeling of the comic, nor pity and terror the feeling of the tragic, though, obviously, in each case the set is closely related; rather, all emotions are reactions to the world of feelings and as such return us to the ordinary world prepared for action.<sup>50</sup> Thus, emotions are not aesthetically valuable intrinsically; everyday sadness is aesthetically neutral, but sadness in response to a poignant Chopin performance has rich aesthetic value as an integral determinant of the aesthetic experience as a whole.

I take it that the basic point driving Dufrenne’s feeling-emotion distinction is that preliminary emotions (for him, these are “feelings”) experienced as part of an aesthetic experience are aesthetically valuable precisely because they have been neutralized with respect to their typically intended, non-aesthetic emotional noema. Or, put the other way around, feeling functions as a hypothesis that the further stratified unfolding of the experience at hand will be aesthetic, and not, say, life-threatening, and hence one’s emotional response should be intended accordingly.<sup>51</sup> The foreboding one feels watching a gritty crime drama is different from the dread one feels when the mugger is staring one in the face, gun in hand; they are two different expressions, felt differently and hence releasing different emotional responses. It is common to suppose that one feels pity and terror when Ophelia sets about drowning herself, but it would be quite uncommon for one to dash to the stage to save her, precisely because one feels the tragic, which neutralizes the pity and terror that would otherwise cause us to spring into action, and I think this supports Dufrenne’s contention that feelings are a kind of knowing. “True art,” he observes, “gives us access to another world which, though not without relationship to the real world, still does not affect us as if it were itself real. The *feeling* it awakens in us *is a means of knowing* this other world, an instrument of knowledge—and not, like emotion, a *means of defense or the sign of an upheaval*.”<sup>52</sup> The classic example of an expression improperly felt, which consequently led to unmodified, non-neutralized emotional interpretations, is the pandemonium that broke out in



response to Orson Wells' famous *War of the Worlds* broadcast.

This dual emphasis on action and knowledge is the other great benefit of Dufrenne's understanding of the matter. It is obvious enough that when one has an emotion one acts, for to have an emotion is to be in the act of emoting, not in static possession of some entity. Authentic feeling reveals a world according to Dufrenne; once that world has been given, emotion is one of the many ways we interpret it, sometimes so as to transform it, and as Dufrenne indicated above, sometimes to engage in "valid action." No surprise then that the Aristotelian tenor of this formulation has the advantage of being especially congenial to my purpose of suggesting how the aesthetic life may be vitally influential in the ethical life through the channels of feeling and emotion that generate felt knowledge. Before finally discussing this, however, we must briefly look at Husserl's notion of the *Lebenswelt* in relation to our discussion so far.

### Aesthetic Objects, Emotions, and the Lifeworld

Much to Dufrenne's credit, his philosophical inclinations with respect to aesthetics lead him, as the end of the last section made evident, to preserve a close connection, through feeling and emotion, between the world of aesthetic experience and the world of ordinary, mundane experience. This makes good sense on at least two levels. First, it is common sense that no matter how transcendent aesthetic experience may sometimes be, artists and aesthetes nonetheless live and breathe and have their being in the ordinary world, the same world in which aesthetic objects arise. Any theory of aesthetics that so radically separates aesthetic experience from ordinary experience as to grant it the status, ultimately, of ineffability is no more valuable than any other theory that supports its claims by asserting "that's just how it is." What one wants is a theory explanatory of how and why it is that aesthetics is practically meaning-ful to ordinary life, not ineffable, and hence, practically meaning-less.

Second, traditionally, artists, at least in the West, commonly hold themselves to be vanguards of culture, boldly and creatively criticizing the status quo, challenging outdated

norms and suggesting through creative expression new possibilities for improvement. The literature of Mark Twain comes to mind here, as does the music of Bob Marley. But a theory, such as Bell's, which reduces aesthetics to ecstatic states of mysterious emotions and claims as art's highest ethical calling the production of "good states of mind"<sup>53</sup> hardly shows how these states conduce to the advancement of society or in what sense artists play any significant role in social progress. It is interesting, therefore, to note the implications of Dufrenne's basic point in light of Husserl's claim in the *Crisis* that:

*All our theoretical and practical themes, we can also say, lie always within the normal coherence of the life-horizon "world." World is the universal field into which all our acts, whether experiencing, of knowing, or of outward action, are directed. From this field, or from objects in each case already given, come all affections, transforming themselves in each case into actions.*<sup>54</sup>

Although Husserl is not referring here specifically to aesthetics there are nonetheless several salient points of contact worth noting. To begin, Husserl here seems to be making a point related to Dufrenne's that affections transform into actions (for Dufrenne feelings respond to the object's expression, directing us toward emotions which in turn direct us toward action); that is, feelings are not gratuitous or superfluous, but significantly functional. Furthermore, they are functional because they arise out of and are underwritten by, and thus relate to, the lifeworld. Finally, Husserl begins by pointing out that even our theoretical pursuits, like aesthetics, are funded by the lifeworld. So just what is this idea of the lifeworld and what is its significance for our investigation?<sup>55</sup>

According to Husserl, the *Lebenswelt*, or lifeworld, is the "always already there, existing in advance for us . . . 'ground' of all praxis whether theoretical or extratheoretical . . . pre-given to us . . . not occasionally but always and necessarily as the universal field of all actual and possible praxis, as horizon."<sup>56</sup> To say that the lifeworld is the horizon which grounds all our activities, actual or possible, is simply to observe that to live is, as Husserl puts it, "always to live-in-certainty-of-the-world."<sup>57</sup> Sig-

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nificantly, this implies that even the project of phenomenology itself presupposes the lifeworld as its ground, but this is no philosophical *hara kari* on Husserl's part. As he notes, with the horizon of the lifeworld providing a sort of naïve assurance of our existence and place in the scheme of things, we are free to live for our particular aims, whether they be trivial ends or "enduring goals" that guide us, rather than living for the answer to the big riddle of the universe.<sup>58</sup>

This ever-present certainty of the world turns out to be a double-edged sword, however. For while it frees us to be indifferent to everything else beyond the more limited "world"-horizon of our particular vocational pursuits and their ends, it also, by virtue of that very fact, leads quite naturally to a certain myopia within the horizon of all these narrower "worlds"—even, and especially, within science, which, perhaps more than all other vocation-worlds, is what Husserl calls a "purposeful structure." That is to say, each of these "worlds" gains its validation by having some purpose of investigation, whereas the *Lebenswelt* is not so validated; instead, its validation is "of its own accord." This leads to valorization of the purposeful, and blindness to the fact that every purposeful structure presupposes the lifeworld and remains part of it, even science with its universal goal of knowing the lifeworld itself in scientific "truth." As Zahavi observes: "Although scientific theory in its idealization transcends the concrete, intuitively given lifeworld, the latter remains as a reference point and meaning-foundation."<sup>59</sup> The scientist as scientist, acts in the scientific attitude, "thinking within the horizon of his theoretical end" and therefore only has eyes for his vocational interests, losing sight of the fact that not only does every vocation-world presuppose the lifeworld, but moreover, every contribution they make becomes a part of the lifeworld.<sup>60</sup>

It should also be noted that by claiming that it is the ground of all our purposeful structures Husserl is not suggesting that we can in no way be critical with respect to the *Lebenswelt* or our relation to it. It is possible to perform an epoché on the lifeworld, and thereby gain a critical perspective on it. Under the epoché, the lifeworld is transformed into a "transcendental phenomenon" and as with consciousness un-

der the phenomenological reduction, in its essence it remains what it was before, though now it is seen to be a "mere 'component' within concrete transcendental subjectivity," and a "'stratum' within the universal a priori of the transcendental [in general]."<sup>61</sup> We each have our lifeworld meant as the world for all through the sense of a "unity of subjectively and relatively meant worlds" collectively overlapping to form the lifeworld; "another world would have no meaning at all for us," Husserl notes.<sup>62</sup> In the epoché, however, it becomes a phenomenon which is no longer a collection of "separated souls" each reduced to its own pure interiority, but rather a

total framework of all souls, which are united not externally but internally, namely, through the intentional interpenetration [*Ineinander*] which is the communalization of their lives. . . . And yet it belongs to each soul that it have its particular world-consciousness in a way which is originally its own, namely, through the fact that *it has empathy experiences*, experiencing consciousness of others as [also] having a world, the same world, that is, each apperceiving it in its own apperceptions.<sup>63</sup>

The significance of all this for aesthetics is twofold. First, as a "purposeful structure," aesthetics also presupposes, is funded by, and adds to the *Lebenswelt*, but second, as the final section will show, even under the epoché, emotions are key to the communalization of lives.

Taking this first point here, we can note that much of what we presuppose about art, its mediation, presentation, and perception is a function of our lifeworld. So, too, are those founding elements we habitually and automatically background and foreground, elements it never occurs to us might be contrasted differently.<sup>64</sup> What counts as an artwork in the first place, and what may or may not be considered as potentially founding an aesthetic object, our understanding of our modes of engaging such objects, especially how, when, and in what contexts (as well as rituals of etiquette in theater, gallery, museum, concert hall), peripheral or halo elements (environmental conditions of the presentational space, level of focus or distraction, the kinds of associations I bring to the encounter, etc.), as well as some core elements

(what features of certain kinds of work are desirable and which are distracting, what constitutes competence in execution and what is clumsy or affected mediocrity), are likewise informed by the *Lebenswelt* of the participant-observer. And of course, as I have been keen to stress above, how various expressions should be felt, and consequently which emotions should be deployed and in what manner is similarly a function of the lifeworld.

In addition to undergirding all the rest, the *Lebenswelt* is also the ground for our intersubjective lives, which is vibrantly characterized by what Husserl calls empathy experiences. Aesthetic experiences are one key forum in which such empathy experiences are given through feelings and interpreted by emotions. Let us once again make the contrast with Bell, for whom “[artistic] expression is no wise bound by the forms or emotions or ideas of life,” and who would have us conceive of aesthetics otherwise.<sup>65</sup>

For, 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. Art transports us from the world of man’s activity to a world of aesthetic exaltation. For a moment we are shut off from human interests; our *anticipations* and memories are arrested; we are lifted above the stream of life.<sup>66</sup>

Whereas Bell detaches aesthetics and the aesthetic emotion entirely and radically from “the world of man’s activity” even to the point that our regular capacities of anticipation, our feelings in Dufrenne’s sense, are arrested, aesthetics and emotions are for Husserl wholly indebted to the *Lebenswelt*. Yet as part of the transcendently reduced lifeworld, aesthetics, with its potential for emotional intelligence through felt knowledge, is one of the most vital modes of achieving empathy experiences and this has integral significance for explaining how the aesthetic life can inform and guide the ethical life since many aesthetic objects are also laden with moral significance.

### **Conclusion: The Aesthetic and Its Relevance for the Ethical**

In this final section it remains to address the relationship between aesthetics and ethics on Husserlian phenomenological terms. Having

examined the Husserlian doctrine of intentionality and traced out its consequences for aesthetic experience, and particularly the role of emotions in aesthetic experience, we moved on to an examination of the relation of the *Lebenswelt* for phenomenology, aesthetics, and the emotions. This last move was intended to show that even the endeavors we take to be our most critical and universal have rather restricted purviews, for in those attitudes we “live communalized under a vocational end,” hence no matter how much one might investigate or utilize elements of the lifeworld in vocational pursuits, it is simply not one’s subject matter as such, thus what any vocation-world provides us “is not, in a full survey, the universe of what is, which is ever in unceasing movement of relativity for us and is the ground for all particular projects, ends, [and] end- and work-horizons for ends of a higher level.”<sup>67</sup>

Despite the fact that all our endeavors unavoidably presuppose the *Lebenswelt* as the horizon of all actual and potential living, and the interests, activities, and “things” entailed therein, one particular horizon stands out to us against the background of this all-encompassing world-horizon. This is the horizon of our fellow men and women. Husserl characterizes it thus:

Before we are even taking notice of it at all, we are conscious of the open horizon of our fellow men with its limited nucleus of our neighbors, those known to us. We are thereby coconscious of the men on our external horizon in each case as “others”; in each case “I” am conscious of them as “my” others, as those with whom I can enter into actual and potential, immediate and mediate *relations of empathy*; [this involves] a reciprocal “getting along” with others; and on the basis of these relations I can deal with them, enter into particular modes of community with them, and then know, in a habitual way, of my being so related. Like me, every human being—and this is how he is understood by me and everyone else—has his fellow men and, always counting himself, civilization in general, in which he knows himself to be living.<sup>68</sup>

In relation to this observation, Husserl also contends that “Our human existence moves within innumerable traditions. The whole cul-

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tural world, in all its forms, exists through tradition.”<sup>69</sup> And yet, at the same time, as was shown at the end of the preceding section, “tradition is open . . . to continued inquiry.”<sup>70</sup> This last claim points to the fact that, while traditional, consciousness is, as Drummond points out in connection with this very passage, also autonomous.<sup>71</sup> Indeed, Husserl holds that tradition implies its inventors and perpetrators, its reformers and revolutionaries. The individual’s experiences take place within the historical horizon of tradition(s), which mold the individual’s intendings as an essential structural element of experience.<sup>72</sup> More than just the generational transfer of common beliefs and practices, tradition in this light also denotes communal intentionality.<sup>73</sup> Thus it shapes the individual’s openness to the future in light of her community’s past because it is the associational consciousness of the historical community<sup>74</sup> and “the meaning-context in which active intentionalities work.”<sup>75</sup>

But as Husserl’s thoughts on science’s relation to the *Lebenswelt* suggest, tradition can be both illuminating and blinding, both providing the ground for meaningful engagement with the world in which we find ourselves, and also blinding us to this very fact, and hence to ways in which our traditions might be questioned and potentially improved. In this regard, tradition both supports and constrains our aesthetic understanding, and the same holds with respect to our ethical understanding. No one is capable of thinking outside the horizon of a lifeworld, but one may think against tradition (though, ironically, as consciousness is inherently traditional, to do so requires that one simultaneously be thinking within the tradition). In fact this sort of self-effacing critical thought is what Husserl calls *authentic thinking*. As Drummond elegantly puts it: “Authentic thinking is to think *for* oneself, but not *by* oneself. We must, in other words, as authentic thinkers always think both with and against tradition.”<sup>76</sup> We might note here that this applies equally well to Dufrenne’s notion of authentic feeling.

However, as Drummond shows elsewhere, community and individuality imply one another in such a way that community can be a “personality of a higher order,” and this means the authentic individual is only possible “to the extent that the communal will—the will of the ‘personality of a higher order’ of which the in-

dividual is a part—does not negate the individual will.”<sup>77</sup>

It has not been my aim thus far to argue that the ethical cannot be conceived or developed without the aesthetic—although I do believe the good is at bottom an aesthetic concept, not only is this debatable, it is entirely possible to develop well-grounded and satisfactory ethical theories without attending to the ways the aesthetic may be at work in them, as evidenced by the wealth of ethical theories which receive ongoing scholarly attention and validation. Rather, my aim has been to offer a Husserlian account of how those aesthetic objects, which both express ethical insights and spur us to moral action, do so. In light of this then, briefly here at the close of this essay I want to suggest that one of the effective tools at our disposal for developing authentic individuals and thereby working toward ethical communities is the promotion of authentic thinking through, among other avenues, aesthetic expression, indeed sometimes *as* aesthetic expression. Aesthetic experience can play a unique role in ethical endeavor in part because it has the unique potential to create deeply profound “relations of empathy.”

As richly stratified, aesthetic experiences can simultaneously be poignant “empathy experiences” on one level and ethical reflections on other levels. When the aesthetic object of such an empathetic-aesthetic experience challenges the tradition, it expresses authentic thinking and the result can be a powerful catalyst for moral growth. Since the human subject “empathetically experiences other subjects in the experience of merely material objects and, much more importantly, in the experience of a concrete world of cultural objects,”<sup>78</sup> culturally shared aesthetic objects communicate a common world of shared experience, generating mutual comprehension but going beyond this, in aid of building of authentic communities, they constitute social acts expressing authentic thinking in which traditional patterns of thought and behavior are interrogated, reevaluated, and potentially revised.

In other words, aesthetics can go a long way toward forming genuinely communal experience not simply in terms of its ability to inspire, convict, or convey value, but also in its methodology. What kind of person ought one to be? What kind of society ought we to work



toward? What constitutes the good? Wrestling with such concerns through authentic aesthetic expressions intelligible to our feelings, which return us to our emotions and to the intersubjective world of common, shared experience empathetically, aesthetic objects can also spur their perceivers to begin thinking authentically themselves. They can convict and inspire at once.<sup>79</sup> Dufrenne provocatively claims that through feeling one puts oneself into question: “Whether or not I am capable of feeling will constitute a self-testing and will also provide the measure of my authenticity. Is it not on account of my feelings, their quality, and their penetration that I am truly judged?”<sup>80</sup> When an aesthetic experience is authentic in this sense, it can often enable emotionally intelligent ethical interactions with people and circumstances in our lifeworld, which had previously gone unnoticed, or simply left us unmoved. Once so touched, once we have become disturbed, “our fellow men” no longer stand out from the horizon of the lifeworld generically, but now as our comrades, allies, and mates, with whom we may see ourselves sharing in certain aspirations, ends, and sufferings, yet who, we may also come to see, are fettered by the very tradition we share in common and from which perhaps I even benefit at their expense. For such as these, our struggling comrades, we are prepared to take action.

It should go without saying that aesthetics’ role in ethical development of course presupposes not only authentic individuals creating authentic work (perhaps a rarity anymore), but also authentic aesthetes. But beyond the level

of producers, products, and perceivers, I think that the very process of aesthetic creation holds valuable *procedural* lessons to be taken and applied to the work of creating an authentic ethical community. In an exceptional passage Ingarden writes:

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 (colors, 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.<sup>81</sup>

Following this paradigm, what might it mean for us to conceive of the authentic community as itself a work of art—or better still, an aesthetic object? What would it mean to take ourselves seriously as artists of an authentic community? Might not aesthetics prove invaluable for ethics after all?

## ENDNOTES

1. Clive Bell, *Art* (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1914). For all its philosophical clumsiness, Bell’s basic position still holds a remarkable amount of appeal, at least to young artists. A few years ago I had the privilege of teaching an aesthetics course for fine arts majors and almost to a student, Bell’s theory was warmly received, if not valorized. Even after carefully working through the philosophical problems the theory raises, most students nevertheless felt a kind of gut-level affinity for the theory. Attempts to elicit articulations of just why that was so were not especially fruitful, but the sense was that Bell’s emphasis on the ecstatic and ineffable nature of the aesthetic experience is what
- held such allure. The problem, of course is not that Bell captures the experience of ecstasy and ineffability, a concrete and common enough sort of thing, but, rather, as Dewey rightly noted, how such a radically ecstatic and ineffable event can be called an experience at all when, by Bell’s own description, it borrows nothing from, nor returns to the world of common experience. See also *ibid.*, 11–12; see note 4 below for Bell’s own expression of this.
2. See John Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, 2nd ed. (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1929), 287–318.
3. It is worth noting at this early stage that Bell was cautious to restrict his theory’s applicability to visual arts, though he suggests in places that it is applicable

- to music, dance, and even nature (though he thinks this is only even possibly the case for artists, not average folk). It takes little imagination, however, to see how the theory could be easily extended to other arts commonly recognized as such today. In any case, Bell's theory does not stand or fall subject to its applicability to particular set of the arts, hence I will not be concerned here to restrict its application strictly to visual arts.
4. "What I have to say is this . . . he who contemplates a work of art, inhabit[s] a world with an intense and peculiar significance of its own; that significance is unrelated to the significance of life. *In this world the emotions of life find no place. It is a world with emotions of its own*" (Bell, *Art*, 26–27; emphasis added).
  5. *Ibid.*, 8.
  6. *Ibid.*, 9; emphasis added.
  7. *Ibid.*, 9–10; emphasis added.
  8. Edmund Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, trans. F. Kersten (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1998), 65.
  9. *Ibid.*, 190.
  10. *Ibid.*, 225; emphasis added.
  11. *Ibid.*, 191.
  12. *Ibid.*, 129.
  13. Marcus Brainard, *Belief and its Neutralization: Husserl's System of Phenomenology in Ideas I* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2002), 135.
  14. Husserl, *Ideas*, 226.
  15. *Ibid.*, 247. Husserl clarifies that "'Objectivation' does not signify here, however, the objectivation-process, and the 'of' does not express here the relation of consciousness and the Object of consciousness."
  16. *Ibid.*, 248.
  17. See Chapter XI, "The Stream of Consciousness," from James' 1892 *Psychology: Briefer Course* (the shorter version of his two-volume 1890 *Principles of Psychology*) for an account of this idea in James' thought. For the development and centrality of this idea in James' thought, see David Lamberth, *William James and the Metaphysics of Experience* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
  18. Husserl, *Ideas*, 197.
  19. This characterization of the halo as an "objective background" should not be misunderstood as being an absolute object either; just as intentionality extends to the noematic core, so it extends to the halo, which means that the halo, too, is a mental process and not an absolute object. "Thus it is clear, for instance, that the objective background, from out of which the cognitively perceived object is singled out by virtue of the fact that the distinctive Ego-advertence is allocated to it, is, as a mental process, actually an objective background" (*ibid.*, 200).
  20. *Ibid.*, 198.
  21. *Ibid.*, 199.
  22. *Ibid.*, 198.
  23. "Owing to its noetic moments, every intentive mental process is precisely noetic; it is of its essence to include in itself something such as a 'sense' and possibly a manifold sense on the basis of this sense-bestowal and, in unity with that, to effect further productions [*Leistungen*] which become 'senseful' precisely by this sense-bestowal. Such noetic moments are, e.g., directions of the regard of the pure Ego to the objects 'meant' by it owing to sense-bestowal, to the object which is 'inherent in the sense' for the Ego; furthermore, seizing upon this object, holding it fast while the regard adverts to other objects which appear in the 'meaning' ["*Vermeinen*"]; likewise, producings pertaining to explicatings, relatings, comprisings, multiple position-takings of believings, deemings likely, valuings; and so forth. All of these are to be found in the mental process in question, no matter how differently structured and varied they are" (*ibid.*, 213–14).
  24. Bell, *Art*, 52.
  25. *Ibid.*, 54.
  26. Roman Ingarden, *Selected Papers in Aesthetics*, trans. Peter J. McCormick (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1985), 91. Compare this with Husserl's claim that "things 'seen' are always more than what we 'really and actually' see of them." Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, trans. David Carr (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970), 51.
  27. *Ibid.*, 112.
  28. See Ingarden, *Selected Papers*, 32.
  29. *Ibid.*, 92.
  30. J. N. Mohanty, *Edmund Husserl's Theory of Meaning* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969), 24–53. This point will take on more significance shortly when we look at Dufrenne's theory of expression and feeling.
  31. Ingarden makes this clear himself, stating: "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 . . . these may differ among themselves in their aesthetic values. But, as has been said, this is not an argument in support of the subjectivity of that value" (*Selected Papers*, 98). Dufrenne adds a similar remark in a footnote: "The aesthetic object always overflows the perception or the consciousness which one has of it. It is open to a

- plurality of interpretations which can be opposed to each other.” Mikel Dufrenne, *The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience*, trans. Edward Casey, Albert Anderson, Willis Domingo, and Leon Jacobson (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 207n15. However, this is not a license to attribute to an artwork any aesthetic meaning one pleases, for as Ingarden also observes: “To every work of art there pertains a limited number of *possible* aesthetic objects” (*Selected Papers*, 93). In this same connection see also John B. Brough, “Plastic Time: Time and the Visual Arts,” in John B. Brough and Lester Embree, eds., *The Many Faces of Time* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2000), 224.
32. To briefly anticipate, I will show in the next section that these peripheral elements (competence, environmental conditions) as well core elements (the character of the work, certain elements of competence) are informed by the *Lebenswelt* of the participant-observer. Indeed, the entire basic ritual or etiquette of this participatory observation is an artifact of one’s *Lebenswelt*.
  33. Ingarden, *Selected Papers*, 93.
  34. *Ibid.*, 114.
  35. *Ibid.*
  36. *Ibid.*, 115.
  37. *Ibid.*, 114.
  38. *Ibid.*, 117.
  39. *Ibid.*, 39; emphasis added.
  40. “*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” (*ibid.*, 98).
  41. Ingarden also makes frequent reference to expression, however, in each case it is clear that expression is for him not a feature of the aesthetic object as such, but always as communicative of either a discrete psychic state of the artist as he composed the work, or of the represented or depicted subject. So whereas Dufrenne is keen to focus on the brushstrokes of a Van Gogh, Ingarden will focus on the expression of the representation of Van Gogh himself, what the eyes and mouth express about what kind of state Van Gogh was in when he painted his self-portrait. The difference is that for Dufrenne we commune with the painting itself for it expresses itself to our feelings, while for Ingarden we commune with Van Gogh, through acts of empathetic projection. (See Dufrenne, *Phenomenology*, 137; Ingarden, *Selected Papers*, 123). These two modes may very well be simultaneously operative and it would be an easy enough task to account for such via intentionality.
  42. Dufrenne, *Phenomenology*, 136.
  43. *Ibid.*, 376–77.
  44. *Ibid.*, 378–79.
  45. *Ibid.*, 378; emphasis added.
  46. Slegers has developed this idea in her work on the philosophical implications of involuntary memory as found in Proust’s *A la recherche du temps perdu*. She presented the idea in two conference papers: one at the Thirty-Third Annual Meeting of the Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy, March 10, 2006, San Antonio, TX, and then in “A Phenomenological Groundwork for Involuntary Memory: Henri Bergson’s Aesthetics and Marcel Proust’s *A la recherche du temps perdu*,” presented at the Fordham Philosophical Society’s 2006 Spring Symposium, Philosophy and Literature: Intersections, April 19, 2006, Bronx, NY.
  47. Mikel Dufrenne, *In the Presence of the Sensuous: Essays in Aesthetics*, trans. Mark S. Roberts and Dennis Gallagher (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, 1987), 8.
  48. Bell, *Art*, 61.
  49. See C. S. Peirce, “Questions Concerning Certain Faculties Claimed for Man” and “Some Consequences of Four Incapacities,” in *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings Vol I (1867–1893)*, ed. by Nathan Houser and Christian Kloesel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 11–55. For Peirce’s account of emotions in this context, see especially Question 4 of the former essay (22–23) where he argues that the internal knowledge of emotions is hypothetically inferred from external factors, noting that “What is here said of emotions in general, is true in particular of the sense of beauty and of the moral sense.” See also the passage on association in the latter essay (50–51) where Peirce argues that emotions are signs and predicates of the thing cognized and all association is by signs such that we attribute either absolutely, relatively, or conventionally the same, but modified, emotional qualities to the signs of things, a claim which resonates harmoniously with Husserl’s doctrine of the neutrality modification. Dewey also makes the point that all thought is hypothetical and inferential but does so in far too many places to cite here. Perhaps the most straightforward is his chapter entitled “The Pattern of Inquiry” in *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1938).
  50. Dufrenne, *Phenomenology*, 378. Ingarden makes a similar point with what he calls “conditional aesthetic values” to which belong some of the emotional qualities of an aesthetic experience. Conditional aes-

- thetic values are inherently neutral as regards aesthetic value but can take on aesthetic value, in a sense are disposed to do so, when associated with other aesthetically valuable qualities (see Ingarden, *Selected Papers*, 104). For Husserl on the neutrality modification, see *Ideas* §§109, 111.
51. I do not mean to suggest here that this hypothetical function is unique to feeling, since quite obviously other strata of consciousness can perform this task as well, as when the scientist, after contemplating the data at hand formulates a hypothesis as to the source of something's cause, etc., although I suspect that even at this more formalized level, something like feeling—a vague sort of knowing, a sense—is operative as well.
  52. Dufrenne, *Phenomenology*, 137; emphasis added.
  53. Following G. E. Moore, Bell holds that “states of mind . . . alone are good as ends” (*Art*, 110–11). Elsewhere he holds that “to justify any human activity, we must inquire—‘Is this a means to good states of mind?’ In the case of art our answer will be prompt and emphatic. Art is not only a means to good states of mind, but, perhaps, the most direct and potent that we possess” (ibid., 114). Therefore, “to pronounce anything a work of art is . . . to make a momentous moral judgment” (ibid., 115).
  54. Husserl, *Crisis*, 144; emphasis added.
  55. Zahavi notes that Husserl's concept of the lifeworld is equivocal and he draws a distinction between an ontological and transcendental understanding of the concept. The ontological understanding can refer to the unquestioned, prescientific, given world of everyday experience, or to the lifeworld as having a genesis and being “under permanent transformation.” This latter alternative accounts for the fact that over time scientific theories become assimilated into daily living, becoming taken for granted themselves, and hence part of the lifeworld. The transcendental understanding of the concept of the lifeworld addresses the fact that all objectivity is for Husserl constituted by transcendental (inter)subjectivity. See Dan Zahavi, *Husserl's Phenomenology* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 131–32.
  56. Husserl, *Crisis*, 142.
  57. Ibid.
  58. See Ibid., Appendix VII, “The Life-World and the World of Science,” 379–83.
  59. Zahavi, *Husserl's Phenomenology*, 129.
  60. Husserl, *Crisis*, 383.
  61. Ibid., 174. Husserl continues, “Within the epoché we are free consistently to direct our gaze exclusively at the life-world or at its a priori essential forms; on the other hand, by correspondingly shifting our gaze we can direct it at the correlates which constitute its ‘things’ or thing-forms, i.e., at the multiplicities of manners of givenness and their correlative essential forms. Further, we can also consider the subjects and communities of subjects, which function in all this, with regard to the essential ego-forms belonging to them. In the alterations of these partial attitudes, which are founded upon one another—whereby the attitude focused on the life-world phenomena serves as point of departure, namely, as transcendental guideline for correlative attitudes on higher levels—the universal task of inquiry, that of the transcendental reduction, is brought to realization.”
  62. Ibid., 254–55.
  63. Ibid., 255; emphasis added.
  64. I do not here intend to suggest that the *Lebenswelt* is reducible to culture. But culture is perhaps the single most influential constituent of the *Lebenswelt*, and much of what we presuppose about the *Lebenswelt*, we do so in culturally mediated or traditional ways. This will become clearer in the following section.
  65. Bell, *Art*, 58.
  66. Ibid., 25; emphasis added. Later, Bell furthers this claim contending that “imperfect lovers bring to art and take away the ideas and emotions of their own age and civilization. . . . But the perfect lover, he who can feel the profound significance of form, is raised above the accidents of time and place” (ibid., 35–36).
  67. Husserl, *Crisis*, Appendix VII, 383.
  68. Ibid. Appendix VI, “The Origin of Geometry,” 358; emphasis added.
  69. Ibid., 354.
  70. Ibid., 355.
  71. John J. Drummond, “Time, History, and Tradition,” in *The Many Faces of Time*, 127.
  72. Ibid., 128.
  73. Ibid.
  74. Ibid., 138.
  75. Ibid., 140.
  76. Ibid.
  77. John J. Drummond, “The ‘Spiritual’ World: The Personal, the Social, and the Communal,” in Thomas Nenon and Lester Embree, eds., *Issues in Husserl's Ideas II* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1996), 238.
  78. Ibid., 242.
  79. It might be argued here that although the aesthetic, empathetic, and moral all involve feelings and emotions, they do not do so in the same way in each case, and, moreover, that the moral underlies volition and action in a way in which the other two do not. In response to the first charge, I willingly grant that feelings and emotions are not at work in the same way in each of these three realms except that in any case they are hypothetical and inferential. As I indicated



above, the vague anticipatory sense which informs the construction of the scientist's hypothesis is felt, though it seems unreasonable to suggest that this feeling functions to neutralize the emotions the way feelings do in the aesthetic context. To the second charge, I concede that the aesthetic and empathetic do not *necessarily* underlie volition and action, but I question in what sense it is supposed that the moral does. If it is claimed that the aesthetic and empathetic do not underlie volition and action at all, I simply reject this as false on its face; if it is claimed that the moral does so in a necessary way, I fail to see how this is the case, except in the sense that all volition and action has moral import. But since both construction of and perception of aesthetic objects

are actions, both have moral import. I agree that merely as a category the aesthetic isn't intrinsically moral (empathy seems to be fairly closely linked, however), but if Husserl's thought reveals anything at all, it is that consciousness is never one-dimensional. Therefore, I take the impulse to radically separate these categories from one another as mistaken; it makes as little sense to suggest that anything is purely ethical as it does to hold that anything is all and only aesthetic since both the ethical and the aesthetic rely on non-ethically or—aesthetically valuable elements for their founding.

80. Dufrenne, *Phenomenology*, 377.

81. Ingarden, *Selected Essays*, 105–06.

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