

Nonrelativity and Subjectivity of Aesthetics Claims

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My paper delineates how some aesthetic claims can be unequivocally true.¹ Unfortunately aesthetic claims are often defined in ways that rule out offhand the possibility of them ever being true. They are said to be nonempirical, because claims that make use of merely our senses or of scientific, empirical procedures, like claims about the types of pigments used in a painting, are clearly not aesthetic. But we do not have to regard aesthetic claims as nonempirical, if the concept of empirical were broadened to include observation that is informed by aesthetic sensibility. Or they are said to be nonfactual, to contrast them from factual claims that are clearly not aesthetic, like claims about when and by whom an artwork was created. But are claims about the style of a painting being neoclassic or romantic — which are clearly aesthetic — any less factual? Or they are said to be value claims, surreptitiously implying that they are colored by our biases and personal ideals. I concede that value-loaded claims, as about an artwork being majestic and monumental, are certainly aesthetic, but value-neutral ones about, say, a work being stark and blunt, or ornamental and gilded, are equally aesthetic. And must we assume that all value claims are biased? Or they are said to be relative and just matter of opinion, because aesthetic qualities, like “ugly,” are not something palpable. But it is crass positivism to suggest that since aesthetic qualities are not physical properties, they cannot be correctly attributed to artworks. The widely-held view notwithstanding, that aesthetic claims are just matters of taste and opinion, the fact is it is normal to acknowledge that some aesthetic claims are incontrovertibly true, about for example a melody being lively and upbeat.

My paper defends two theses. Thesis One is, *some* aesthetic claims are true and nonrelative. I do not deny that there are also relative aesthetic claims. However, I do not investigate here what sorts of aesthetic claims are relative. Rather, my primary question is, how can an aesthetic claim be true for all? Thesis Two is, *all* aesthetic claims, even those nonrelative, are subjective; that is to say, they are in the final analysis contingent on how humans are constituted. This raises the question of how the nonrelative aesthetic claims are also subjective. My strategy is to first examine gustatory claims. These lend themselves better to scrutiny. By my establishing nonrelativity of some gustatory claims (by

refuting the positivists' stance), I will the better demonstrate nonrelativity of some aesthetic claims.

I. The Issue of the Relativity of Gustatory Claims; and Brief Remarks on Their Subjectivity

This formal requirement holds: for it to be a gustatory or an aesthetic claim it should *not* merely state the subject's response toward foods or artworks; rather it must be formulated as making a claim about foods or artworks themselves. This is so even if it were reducible to a "personal opinion." And a claim C would be reducible to a personal opinion if these two conditions apply: (1) C can be fully translated to a descriptive statement about the response and attitude of the person towards some artifact or food, without any loss of meaning. (2) C is not binding on others.

If all gustatory and aesthetic claims were essentially personal opinions, then they would be relative. Definition: A claim X is relative if it is possible for some humans to correctly uphold X, while for others to correctly uphold the negation of X. It is a personal opinion to declare, "Apples taste better than oranges." However, this claim is incorrectly upheld if the subject actually preferred oranges instead.

An obvious rule: it is never possible to correctly uphold a claim that is categorically false. But a relative claim and its negation can be correctly upheld.

Hence relative claims are not categorically false. This rule is also obvious: If a claim R were categorically true, then the claim not-R must be categorically false. Consequently not-R could not be correctly upheld. But by definition the negation of a relative claim can be correctly upheld. Hence R cannot be categorically true. Thus relative claims can *also* be defined as those that are neither categorically true nor categorically false.

Let us consider the positivists' reason for relegating all gustatory claims to relativism. A. J. Ayer declares that "any dispute about a matter of taste will show that there can be disagreement without formal contradiction."² But why does he believe that a gustatory claim and its contrary can be both always correctly upheld? The answer is implicit in this statement: "At the same time, it must be admitted that if the other person persists in maintaining his contrary attitude, without however disputing any of the relevant facts... then there is no sense in asking which of the conflicting view is true..."³ Hence only "facts," or more precisely, only aposteriori claims about the physical world, are not relative.⁴ This raises two questions. Are gustatory claims reducible to factual ones? If not, *must* they then be deemed relative?

Consider these three assertions (A1 to A3):

- A1. This substance is bitter.
- A2. This cup is red.
- A3. This person is old.

A2 and A3 could be nonrelative *to some degree* for positivists, because “red” and “old” could be translated to claims about the physical world. *Red* could mean “a surface reflecting light having wavelength of a particular range R” (or, “range R light” for short), and *old* would denote “having been in existence for more than ninety percent of the average total life span of the members of one’s species, kind or group.” This does not entirely do away with relativity because some odd person may perceive range R light as blue, or may regard old anyone above sixty percent of the average total life span. Thus we would have to *stipulate* to what facts “red” and “old” refer.

These are the requirements of the positivists: A claim that predicates a property P of a thing T is nonrelative, only if P can be correctly substituted for a descriptive claim about some *physical* states-of-affairs S. The *minimum* condition for this substitution to be possible is that whenever we correctly apply the predicate P there also exists the physical fact S, because S is a necessary condition for P. It may be objected that A2 does not meet the positivists’ requirements, because the necessary condition for redness is not the physical fact of the reflected range R light, but that there exist the peculiar sense data that we have, to which we give the appellation “red.” I concede that (1) how we perceive light is a necessary condition for what is called red, and that (2) how we perceive something, or what sense data we have, is not empirically verifiable, physical states-of-affairs but is a private experience, and hence that (3) this necessary condition does not meet the positivists’ requirements for nonrelativity. But there *also* is a physical state-of-affairs which is a necessary condition. Since what a healthy, normal eye perceives to be red can legitimately be regarded as red, and since a healthy eye does perceive the range R light to be red, the range R light is also a necessary condition for redness.

The question is: Does A1 meet the positivists’ requirements for nonrelativity? Perhaps for certain substances, like quinine, we could isolate the chemical compound X that makes quinine bitter; and any substance containing a certain percentage of X would most likely also taste bitter. But while X is a sufficient condition for why some foods are bitter, X is not a necessary condition for why all bitter things are bitter. Even substances unlike quinine and devoid of X can be bitter. It is a common experience that many disparate substances taste bitter, making the hypothesis unlikely that *all* bitter substances share some common chemical ingredients. In other words, it is possible that there is not even a fixed set of chemical compounds, which is a necessary condition for bitter taste. Since “bitter” may not stand for some factual condition, A1 could be considered relative by positivists.

I reject the positivists’ stance that the only true claims there are, are scientifically verifiable physical facts and apriori claims. By our everyday understanding, truth can be predicated of many other kinds of claims besides these. Hence it makes perfect sense to say of a scenery that it is majestic or quaint, without implying that these predicates refer to some properties existing “out there,” in my ken. Positivists would

regard such claims neither true nor false and would consider the common usage wrong. They decide upon how best to define truth, and then conclude the relativity of gustatory claims. I propose another route. Instead of imposing a preconceived idea of truth, I will examine the rationale for the common usage first. "Lemons are sour, quinine bitter" is proclaimed true. I ask: In what sense is this claim regarded true? Is this sense justified?

Many gustatory claims are just not reducible to personal opinions. It is required of all people to declare lemons sour. A person who finds lemons tasteless would have to concede that he finds even sour substances bland. Implicit in the claim that lemons are sour is the requirement that we apply, not our personal responses as a standard, but that of a sound tongue. And since most people have an adequate ability to taste, their consensus can be made the standard. But why cannot each decide for himself what is the standard? My answer: certain standards are often implicitly woven in the very web and woof of the meaning of certain claims. For example, it *must* be said of a hundred-year-old man that he is very old, despite the fact that a century is but a moment in geological time. Sometimes it is not left to our discretion to decide upon a standard.

In our everyday conversation, we declare some gustatory claims true. This customary practice is justified because it is consistent with what is logically expected of true claims. One requirement of a true claim is, its negation cannot be correctly upheld. No one can correctly declare that quinine is sweet, irrespective of his or her personal responses. A supra-individual standard decides bitter and sweet. Another plausible requirement of a true claim is that it be informative. The nonrelative gustatory claims *are* informative. Were a person to declare something sour or bitter or sweet, the above-mentioned supra-individual standard informs us of what to expect. (Of course a false claim disappoints rather than fulfills our expectations.) But we cannot be sure of what to expect when he declares that something is hot and spicy. What is spicy for an Irish palate is bland for an Indian, yet both regard sugar sweet and lemons sour. In conclusion, their irreducibility to physical facts notwithstanding, some gustatory claims can legitimately be said to be true and nonrelative.

Let the following claim be dubbed Type One or T1 claim, to be later distinguished from another type.

T1. Lemons are sour, quinine bitter.

Some may argue that T1 is by no means nonrelative because the healthy tongues of the members of other species may respond to quinine differently. This argument points out merely the *subjectivity* and not the relativity of T1. The reason why T1 is said to be nonrelative is that, by

implicitly requiring *all* humans to apply some supra-individual standards, T1 is thereby distinguished from those gustatory claims, which are in fact personal opinions (like, “apples taste better than oranges”). Nevertheless T1 is contingent on human constitution in a way that facts of the physical world or a mathematical proposition may not be. This makes for its *subjectivity*. My terminology points out what distinguishes T1, both, from personal opinions, as well as from factual and apriori claims. I examine the issue of subjectivity later.

There are nonrelative gustatory claims of a very different type. The very sense of these claims make it clear that the standard required for us to assent to or reject them is not that of the normal tongue, but that of a very fine one. Consider this “Type Two” (T2) claim:

T2. This is a sound, well-balanced wine.

It is the verdicts of those who are connoisseur wine tasters that establish the caliber of wines; and it is this supra-individual standard that accounts for T2’s nonrelativity. Some may object thus: Why should I consider the views of the so-called experts any better than my own predilections and judgment? Response: A person either has or has not developed the ability to discern and identify precisely the aroma, bouquet, balance, body, soundness, astringency and color of wines. Having a discerning and educated tongue is a testable quality. And there are pleasures reserved for those who have it. T2 informs us of the savors to be relished by those with developed acute sensibilities.

Finally, another separate group of gustatory claims exist. These are unique in that, while they are not merely personal opinions, they are not categorically true either. I will designate this group as relatively true claims. From a particular standpoint a relatively true claim is definitely true. That is to say we cannot adopt this standpoint, and yet deny the relatively true claim in question. However, the standpoint is but a result of fortuitous factors of birth and upbringing; and hence there exists no requirement on others to adopt it.

Consider this claim, “This Irish dish is spicy.” If an Irish dish were compared with other typical Irish dishes, or judged from the standpoint of the Irish palate or those reared on Irish foods, it could be stated incontrovertibly that a dish is spicy. But were the self-same dish Indian, it would be regarded as bland, because from the standpoint of the Indian palate, all Irish dishes are more or less bland. While there is a supra-individual standard to judge the spiciness of Irish dishes, it is not shared by all. Now consider this other example: “This Moroccan dish is done very well.” It is not merely a matter of personal opinion which dishes are done well. If there were no acknowledged differences between those dishes cooked very well and those not, we would not be able to rate restaurants and cooks. But they are rated all the time. However, only those who are familiar with and relish Moroccan cuisine can properly rate Moroccan dishes. This claim is deemed true within a certain perspective, a perspective that not all humans share or are supposed to share.

There are four kinds of gustatory claims: the two types (T1 and T2) of nonrelative claims, claims that are relative truths, and claims that are personal opinions.

All gustatory claims are subjective. A subjective truth can best be characterized as one that is not objectively true. And I propose two definitions of objective, to correspond to the two kinds of objectively true claims.

Physical facts as well as necessary apriori truths are objective. The two differ in that the former articulate contingent facts, facts that happen to have validity in this universe but need not be valid in another kind of universe, while the latter, by revealing the necessary conceptual relationships, have validity in and for any possible universe. I first discuss the objectivity of physical facts, like, "A water molecule comprises one oxygen and two hydrogen atoms." This is my *first* definition: An objective truth is a proposition whose truth is not affected by, but is independent how humans are constituted. Now, had we been constituted differently we might have been incapable either of knowing or of formulating in a meaningful way the composition of water. Nevertheless the actual composition of water remains a fact independent of what and how we conceive or formulate anything.

Also objective are the necessary apriori truths, like this mathematical claim, "The series of prime numbers is infinite." Some may argue that such a claim cannot possibly be objective because infinite series and prime numbers cannot have existence independently of minds. (What would that mean?) I will offer a second definition, according to which objectivity has to do with being independent of the *accidental* features of our natures, and not with being independent of human minds as such. That is to say, a claim would not be objectively true if it lacks independence in *this* sense: chance events in the pathway of our evolution and contingent facts of genetics and environment have formed human minds to think in particular ways, and that apriori claims express the outlook of the minds so evolved by chance, and that in different circumstances we *could* have evolved to regard very different apriori claims true. Now let us suppose this: that rationality is not merely an accidental by-product of evolution, environment and human biology, and that it consists of comprehending universal conceptual truths, and that there is no peculiarly human way of being rational, and that all beings, human or not, insofar as they reason, reason similarly. Suppose further that apriori claims express the rational point of view, thereby presupposing minds that reason. If such were the case, apriori claims would then not express some peculiar viewpoint that humans happen to have as a result of some quirks in their nature. My second definition sums all this up: Objective truths are those which all rational beings, even non-human rational beings, if they exist, must acquiesce in, and affirm to be true.

The two different kinds of claims are objective for somewhat different reasons. This makes for objectivity for each: Matters of fact are independent of human minds as such, while apriori claims are

independent of the peculiarly and specifically human viewpoint. But there is one thing we can say about *any* objectively true claim; it is not grounded in the peculiarly human way of conceiving anything.⁵

A subjective truth, by contrast, expresses specifically the human perspective, in that, it is such a claim that had humans been constituted differently, they could rightfully have regarded it as not true. Also, not all non-human rational beings have to acquiesce in what is subjectively true (to humans). Now surely had we evolved very different kinds of sense organs, we would have declared very different gustatory claims true. Sugar is declared sweet only because the normal tongue finds it so. One reason why this is the normal response is that those with the genetic propensity to find it sweet had an advantage over and ousted those with a propensity to find it acrid or even merely bland, because, since they enjoyed consuming foods with sugar, they had more energy for survival purpose. But had sugar impaired our immune system, natural selection could have favored those with a different genetic propensity, and this claim *could* have been nonrelative: "Sugar is acrid." Since gustatory claims are contingent on the sense of taste developed in humans, these claims are subjective truths.

II. Nonrelativity of Aesthetic Claims

G. Hermeren classifies all aesthetic predicates under six categories.⁶ I contend that four would suffice.

The first category he calls reaction qualities, which include predicates like funny, exciting and boring. M. Beardsley argues that, since such predicates chronicle primarily the audience's reaction to artworks rather than describe the artworks themselves, they are not fitting aesthetic predicates.⁷ No doubt, to say of a play that it is exciting is to say merely that it excites the audience. But, as I will later show, the audience's response is the standard that determines what predicates can correctly be ascribed to *some* artworks (though not to all).

He calls the second emotion qualities, like serene, somber and solemn, which refer to emotions expressed in artworks. The third are dubbed behavior qualities, like dynamic, vehement and bold. These refer to behavior or personality traits. Artworks are expressive of both emotion and behavior qualities. I amalgamate Hermeren's second and third categories under this one rubric: *expressive* qualities.

The fourth category, which he names gestalt qualities, includes unified and simple. These describe the composition of an artwork and the relation of its parts. I will label them *formal* qualities instead, because they disregard the content of artworks,

The fifth he calls taste qualities, which are "value loaded terms," like beautiful, depraved and sublime. He states that these are based on "canons of taste internalized by critics."⁸ I contest that aesthetic sensibility or taste is required to recognize any aesthetic qualities. Further, aesthetic qualities of other categories can be equally value loaded. Serene and harmonious are *positive*, expressive and formal

qualities respectively, while sterile and disorganized are *negative*. But these point to only positive or negative *aspects*. "Serene," a positive quality, does not vindicate the entire artwork; the latter could be insignificant for all its serenity. Thus there can be a separate category for predicates that judge the entire artwork. Insignificant, insipid, puerile, flat and inane are terms of condemnation, while beautiful, significant, elevated and sublime are terms of approval of the work as a whole. I will call such predicates *judgmental* terms.

Redundant is Hermeren's sixth category, nature qualities, for terms like cool, deep and luminous. He believes that these qualities are first observed in nature but are by "metaphorical extension" applied to artworks. But emotional states and personality traits are also quite naturally found to be cool or warm or deep. In fact natural phenomena themselves, like spring or sunsets, are so interwoven and overlaid with emotional characters, that it is not by a detached observation of nature that we ferret out nature qualities (because then "cool" or "warm" would refer to merely the temperature). Rather these qualities, as applied to artworks, are clearly derived from an association with emotional states and personality traits. Nature qualities will be subsumed under expressive qualities.

Aesthetic claims that make use of judgmental terms are *value* claims, while claims that ascribe predicates of my first three categories of reaction, expressive and formal qualities can be called *interpretive* claims, despite the latter predicates not always being value-neutral.

This makes for a relative claim: An interpretive aesthetic claim (i) expresses a person's response to an artwork, and (ii) the response is unique to and inextricably linked with his temperament, and (iii) we are not justified either to condemn or condone this response, or to dictate to him how he ought to respond. Strong responses can be triggered by, and incredible significance attached to, certain artifacts like the Statue of Liberty or the watch of a dear, long-gone mother. It is unproblematic to state that, just as these responses admit of neither praise nor censure, so also are certain responses to artwork relative. There is nothing right or wrong in a person having an affinity for, and finding, Gauguin's paintings of the South Pacific especially soothing, because they evoke lovely childhood memories of the sea. What is problematic, and what I investigate here, is how aesthetic claims are nonrelative. The following would establish nonrelativity: There is a correctly upheld interpretive or value claim C, such that it is not possible to correctly uphold the negation of C. I ask, are there any aesthetic claims, which all humans are required to affirm? If so, why?

I will first sketch an outline of how some aesthetic claims are nonrelative, before arguing for my thesis in some detail.

There is a remarkable heterogeneity in the significations of aesthetic claims. The self-same aesthetic claim can take on two entirely different meanings. Consider this claim C:

C. This film is deeply moving.

In some cases, this first sense (S1) is the exact equivalent of C.

S1. This film *does* deeply affect humans. Just as it is ludicrous to designate a narcotic a depressant when it stimulates rather than sedates most who ingest it, so also there are films which can only be regarded as deeply moving, if the general audience is stirred by them.

But there are films, which can be designated as deeply moving even if only few are stirred by it. If public's response were *always* made the standard, absurdities would result. We would then have to conclude that Van Gogh's paintings were not deeply moving during his lifetime because they were then generally despised, but became stirring artworks when they gained recognition. However, the paintings can be said to be deeply moving even in face of public censure, for this reason: they have the potential to deeply move us. This second sense of C can be stated thus:

S2 This film *can* deeply affect us, if we could respond to it. When C is equivalent to S1 then it belongs to class of aesthetic claims designated as Type One or T1 claims, and when C means S2, it is a T2 claim.

I will be defending these six propositions which account for, both, the above dichotomy and the nonrelativity of some aesthetic claims: (1) Apprehending, evaluating and appreciating art requires the involvement of our concerns, interests and aspirations, or in short, our emotions. (2) The emotions requisite for apprehending *popular* art, like, "pop music" or slapstick comedies, are of a mundane nature, and hence generally accessible. (3) The emotions requisite for apprehending *serious* art are nobler, higher, more delicate or more refined, and hence not generally accessible. (4) T1 claims are about popular art; and since the public can access it, their verdict can be the standard. (5) T2 claims are about serious art, and only the verdict of the "true judges" can be the standard. Note that the T1 and T2 aesthetic *and* gustatory claims are both nonrelative for similar reasons. (6) The T2 *value* claims are nonrelative also because claims about high and noble or low and base mental states are nonrelative.

The standard of nonrelativity of T1 claims is different from that of T2 claims. Interestingly, this is reflected in the very meaning of the English word "standard." What is standard can mean what is usual, normal and customary. But a standard can also mean a model and a paragon. My primary interest here is T2 claims about serious art. Popular art is discussed merely to distinguish T2 from T1 claims.

A clarification and defense of my central claim that art apprehension presupposes *participatory* attention, requires that I examine a view contrary to mine, namely, of E. Bullough and J. Stolnitz.

Bullough explores the nature of the specifically aesthetic perception by examining, surprisingly, how the natural phenomenon of fog is experienced. Practical concerns, which are what normally

preoccupy us, indispose and impair us from enjoying the astonishing beauty of a foggy landscape. We view fog as a nuisance, if not as downright dangerous. Only through “psychical distance,” through “the cutting-out of the practical sides of things and of our practical attitude to them,”⁹ can we appreciate fog aesthetically. Stolnitz also argues that practical concerns make our perceptions “limited and fragmentary.”¹⁰ He contrasts the aesthetic attitude and perception from “the attitude people usually adopt.”¹¹ The latter is swayed by practical interests, while the former is disinterested and objective.

Their argument comprises premises P1, P2, and deductions D1, D2.

P1 Mundane, practical concerns and interests stymie aesthetic appreciation.

P2 Aesthetic attitude is a highly unusual way of perceiving something.

D1 Psychical distance and disinterestedness is needed for an aesthetic appreciation of something.

D2 Aesthetic attitude is characterized by psychical distance and disinterestedness.

While P1 is a fundamental insight of Bullough and Stolnitz, D1 cannot be inferred from it. Even if aesthetic appreciation (of serious art) must be cleansed of everyday practical concerns and interests, must it be divested of *all* concerns and interests, to the point of being disinterested, neutral and impartial? Why cannot aesthetic attention (of serious art) engage *higher* concerns, aspirations and valuations?

G. Dickie rejects Bullough and Stolnitz for a different reason. He argues that disinterestedness is the hallmark of not only aesthetic contemplation, but of *all* genuine attention, because a person who can neither maintain distance nor expunge self-centered concerns cannot attend to what is there. Dickie rejects P2, that *aesthetic* attention is some out-of-the-ordinary activity, in that it is especially disinterested. The problem he sees with Stolnitz’s and Bullough’s theory is that it “entails that there are at least two kinds of attention, and that the concept of the aesthetic can be defined in terms of one of them.”¹² He argues to the contrary that “there is no reason to think that there is more than one kind of attention involved.”¹³ We attend to artworks no differently from attending to anything else, by being disinterested. There is no distinctive class of aesthetic attention.

I reject the basic tenets D1 and D2 of Bullough and Stolnitz, tenets which Dickie never questions, that the *only* correct way to contemplate art is disinterestedly. I contest that there also exists a *participatory attention* requiring a participation of our likes and dislikes, interests and concerns, just as there exists an impartial, neutral and disinterested attention. Not only need our interests, concerns and

valuations not distract or blind us, but often they can open our eyes to aspects of a work otherwise hidden. For example, our sexual drives and proclivities could help us recognize and relish the sexual charm and suggestiveness of a subtle, erotic picture.

No doubt emotions also blind. Not all emotional responses constitute participatory attention; and these four conditions disqualify the former: (1) We respond merely to some inconsequential or extraneous features of a work, to the detriment of essential ones. (2) We are so affected by one or two features of a work, that we do not respond to many other aspects. (3) Before even examining an artwork, we are strongly committed to responding to it either favorably or unfavorably. (4) It is so essential for us to hold on to a certain viewpoint, and opening ourselves to foreign viewpoints is so uncomfortable, that we respond to an artwork only insofar as it bolsters our views. I contend that the solution to incorrect emotional responses is not disinterestedness but correct emotional responses.

This is Kant's explanation of the experience of the sublime:

In this way nature is not judged to be sublime in our aesthetic judgments in so far as it excites fear, but because it calls up that power in us... of regarding as small the things about which we are solicitous... and of regarding its [nature's] might... as nevertheless without any dominion over us... Therefore nature is here called sublime merely because it elevates the imagination...¹⁴

Hence only if it triggers heroic feelings in us can a nature's spectacle be judged sublime. "Sublimity, therefore, does not reside in anything of nature, but only in our mind, in so far as we can become conscious that we are superior to nature. . . Everything that excites this feeling in us, e.g., the *might* of nature which calls forth our forces, is called then (although improperly) sublime."¹⁵ His view that something is improperly called sublime, if the latter is not some property "out there," is a type of reasoning reminiscent of positivism which I have already rejected. I concur with Kant, however, that the apprehension of the sublime requires a *participatory* attention. I mean this: Our heroic aspirations are that we not be subdued by fear, external forces or internal vicious impulses. At the sight of nature's cataclysm we may feel in ourselves a power to resist all subjugation. This heroic mental state is inextricably linked with apprehending the sublime in nature.¹⁶ The sublime is not apprehended disinterestedly, because the apprehension involves or is built on our strivings, aspirations and valuations.

We cannot disinterestedly enjoy popular art. The aspirations of our mundane existence are the ones that the protagonist of a melodramatic film, for example, sees fulfilled, namely, to be sexy and to charm, to be lucky and to win impossible odds, to be rich and to triumph over others. To the extent that our not-so-sublime interests are involved

and we can sympathetically participate, if not identify ourselves, with the protagonist, we respond to the film. In serious art the interplay of all mundane emotions cannot be categorically ruled out; however, a sole preoccupation with these would block art appreciation.

The quality of the states of the soul requisite for art apprehension can testify in many cases to the quality of the artworks themselves. Something can be regarded as high art in many cases because it inspires high emotions. Hence aesthetic *value* claims are in many cases founded on claims about the quality of the states of the soul in question. Now if claims about lofty, noble, sublime and positive states or mean, growling and negative ones were relative, by being founded on the specific moralities of particular societies, then many aesthetic value claims would also be relative. But the verdicts of various moralities are not the correct measures of the nobility and baseness of the states of the soul. In fact moralities can themselves be high, mediocre and low. A high morality is associated with high states, by expressing the aspirations of high-souled humans or by approving high mindedness or by propelling us to heights. Hence, not only is morality not the judge of high states, it itself is judged by the latter. This is the central point: an external measure is not needed to judge the quality of emotions. Rather, the states of the soul give themselves out to be noble or base. The contemptible states are *self*-condemning; negativity enshrouds them, disapprobation plagues them. We exult in our heights, they are *self*-affirming and *self*-justifying. Hence, claims about the height of the states of the soul, and consequently about the worthiness of artworks are in many cases nonrelative.

Hume in his essay, "Of the Standard of Taste," provides this reason for the nonrelativity of T2 claims:

Some particular forms or qualities, from the original structure of the internal fabric, are calculated to please, and others to displease; and if they fail of any effect in any particular instance, it is from some apparent defect or imperfection of the organ... In each creature, there is a sound and a defective state, and the former alone can be supposed to afford us a true standard of taste and sentiment.¹⁷

The true judges are arbiters, and their verdict the standard, because, possessing sound sensibilities, they are receptive to, and can evaluate, the features of artworks meant to truly please. The sound state of a true judge consists of "a strong sense, united by delicate sentiment, improved by practice, perfected by comparison and cleared of prejudice."¹⁸ Despite finding his views deficient, I concur with his basic thesis.

It is problematic to regard the beauty of artworks as "certain qualities in objects, which are fitted by nature to produce those particular feelings [of pleasure]."¹⁹ The logical consequence of this view is that, it would be possible in principle to catalogue features requisite for a thing

of beauty. There are, however, no determinate rules to which all works must conform, to be beautiful. There is beauty in Bach and Mozart, in da Vinci and Degas, yet how different they are. Each artist imparts beauty to artworks in his unique and personal way. (This point is discussed in the next section.) Also problematic is Hume's list of the qualifications of true judges. Refinement seems to be the primary quality. No doubt this is needed to appreciate the formal qualities of order, composition, rhyme, rhythm, form and design. But to respond to the expressive qualities, there must also be nobility and depth of feeling. In any case, making a list of qualifications is itself problematic. A sensitive and learned critic, well versed in a specific era, could harbor the most inane notions about certain art forms or artists of that era. Hume's claim that there are true judges is correct, only if it is not implied that their talent and learning is a surety for the correctness of their claims.

Scholars debate whether Hume's definitions of "good critic" and "good art" are circular. It is very well for him to say that a good critic has a "strong sense, united by delicate sentiment," but how is one to establish who has this? It appears that the only way a fine and delicate sensibility is detected is when the ability to appreciate good art is manifested. This is a vicious circle: good art is that which is approved of by good critics, and a good critic is the one who appreciates good art. Each can only be explained in terms of the other.

P. Kivy counters this objection by showing that most of the characteristics of a good critic can be defined independently.²⁰ He argues that, "delicacy of taste," for example, is inextricably tied to "delicacy of passion"; and the latter can be defined in a nonaesthetic context. But N. Carroll rejects this. Delicacy of taste is not the concomitant of delicacy of passion. An emotional person may be insensitive to art, while a person of exquisite aesthetic sensibility may not evince much emotion.²¹ If delicacy of taste cannot be determined independently, and if it is discerned only by our ability to appreciate good art, then Hume's definitions are circular.

There exists, however, an empirical way of recognizing true judges. The clue is in this statement: "Many people, when left to themselves, have but a faint and dubious perception of beauty, who yet are capable of relishing a fine stroke which is pointed out to them."²² When the suggestions of a critic open our eyes to the merits of an artwork, we have a first-hand experience of his worthiness. L. Venturi writes, "Cezanne deliberately distorted objects in order to represent them from different angles, to turn around them and bring out the fullness of their volume, and to convey by the liberties he took the vital energy of objects."²³ If these comments enable us to see for ourselves that the distorted objects, far from being botched, are in fact powerfully expressive, then one can vouch for the penetration of Venturi.

G. Sircello argues that the opinions of the experts do not matter, but rather "one's perceptual reports must be used as the only reason for one's judgment of a work of art." "Let us then admit that our aesthetic judgments cannot be grounded by appeals to authority."²⁴ His position, however, is ambiguous because it could mean two quite different things.

One, that the verdicts of the critics carry no weight because no such thing as an "expert" exists in matters of art interpretation. Two, that it is problematic to distinguish a correct from a mistaken interpretation of an artwork, because even critics can be inept. Hence only those judgments can be vouched for whose validity has been established by our own experience. I certainly concur with the second, but not with the first proposition. Of course, we cannot abdicate our judgment and blindly follow the so-called experts. This may raise doubts about the need for critics, since ultimately we must rely on our own judgment. I uphold these three points: (1) The acuity of some critics has been proven to us, by them shedding light on artworks. (2) Our views on artworks must be informed by their verdict. (3) While their views *prima facie* carry more weight, it does not guarantee truth.

My absolutist position regarding T2 claims may be seen by some as not being appreciative of the diversity of interpretations that artworks can lend themselves to. B. Heyl, for one, supports relativism for precisely this reason. While discussing Bramantino's *Adoration of the Magi*, he writes:

Adolfo Venturi admires the picture greatly, finding in it an effect of "regal splendour" and a supreme example of balancing cubistic masses... Berensen, on the contrary,... finds in it no evidence of serious art. The verdict is readily comprehensible too, since we know that, for Berensen, art must present notable tactile values, movement and space composition. A third... considers the, standard of "associative form" a basic one. According to this standard the painting is inferior since certain gestures, postures and expression seem affectedly conceived...²⁵

Heyl is entirely mistaken to say that only a relativist would be open to all three interpretations; so would an absolutist. Maybe Venturi is right that the painting has regal splendor, and Berensen that it has no tactile values, and the third opinion that the gestures are affected. Each provides one perspective of looking at the artwork, and since neither contradicts the others, all *could* be valid. "Perspectivism" is a better theory than "relativism." It admits of many interpretations without relegating them all to the level of personal opinions. An absolutist's position need not be constrictive, because he can approve of multiple and valid perspectives, which enrich our understanding.

While they both may admit of the possibility of multiple interpretations, relativism differs from perspectivism by denying that any interpretation is true or false unequivocally. Relativists could defend their view thus: Arguments about the truth and falsity of interpretations are futile. The most that can be demanded of viewers is that they come up with *good* interpretations, namely, interpretations that are consistent, account for all the salient features and are original. This view, I argue, is untenable.

There are reasons to reject Goethe's and J. J. W. Winckelmann's interpretations of Greek art, even while conceding that they are consistent, thorough and original. F. Nietzsche writes about Goethe's interpretation:

[It is] incompatible with that element out of which Dionysian art grows—the orgiastic. Indeed I do not doubt that as a matter of principle Goethe excluded anything of the sort from the possibilities of the Greek soul. *Consequently Goethe did not understand the Greeks.*²⁶

Goethe would surely misinterpret Greek art, if the innermost aspirations of the Greeks, by being judged morally reprehensible, were ignored by him. Winckelmann suggests that, in the most famous of Greek sculptures, Laocoon is depicted as superior to his suffering, just as “the depths of the sea remain always at rest, however the surface may be agitated.”²⁷ G. E. Lessing interprets differently why Laocoon's countenance is not contorted with pain.

Imagine Laocoon's mouth open and judge. Let him scream and see. It was, before, a figure to inspire compassion in its beauty and suffering. Now it is ugly, abhorrent, and we gladly avert our eyes from a painful spectacle, destitute of the beauty which alone would turn pain into sweet feeling of pity for the suffering object.²⁸

While it is “northern heroism” to “stifle all signs of pain, to meet the stroke of death with unaverted eye, to die laughing under the adder's sting,”²⁹ this is not the idealism to which the Greeks aspired: “a cry, as an expression of bodily pain, is not inconsistent with nobility of soul, according to the views of the ancient Greeks.”³⁰ In short, *if* Winckelmann's thesis that Laocoon is depicted as someone too noble to scream, results from his attempt to see his own ideals mirrored in the work, then he misinterprets. A correct apprehension of artworks requires that we partake of the aspirations of the artists, evoke in ourselves their longings, and transfigure our world with their glow. I concede that we applaud rather than censure even those plays of Racine, Goethe and Sartre, where the Greek legends of Andromache, Iphigenia and Orestes are interpreted loosely and freely. But what is applauded here is the creation of *new* artistic visions, and not the correctness of the interpretation of the Greeks' worldview.

Serious art either embodies a grand, profound, enigmatic or complex worldview, or it evokes and expresses delicate, noble or deep emotions. The standard of correctness of T2 claims is the verdict of those few who can access the out-of-ordinary emotions requisite for the apprehension of serious art; and this accounts for the nonrelativity of T2 claims. The general public, however, can judge how well popular art conveys, evokes and expresses ideas and emotions. The majority

response can function as the nonrelative standard of T1 claims.

III. Subjectivity of T2 Aesthetic Claims

I provide two sets of reasons to make a case for the subjectivity of aesthetic claims. With the first set I make my case only indirectly and by default, by showing that the claims cannot possibly be objective. If aesthetic terms were code words for some factual, physical states-of-affairs, then they could be objectively true. A necessary condition for redness is the physical fact of a surface reflecting range R light; thus "red" can be a code word for the latter. By demonstrating that no physical states-of-affairs are necessary conditions for the applicability of aesthetic terms, I establish that aesthetic terms are not code words for physical states-of-affairs, and hence that aesthetic claims are not objective. My second set of reasoning will directly demonstrate subjectivity, by showing that aesthetic claims are valid primarily from the human point of view. It will also be made clear that this does not imply that such aesthetic claims are relative. First discussed are the aesthetic predicates that I call expressive qualities, followed by a discussion of formal qualities and judgmental terms.

I concur with an important point A. Tormey makes concerning expressive qualities of artworks. He states that even though "the nonexpressive qualities are *wholly* constitutive of its [i.e., an artwork's] expressive qualities,"³¹ no set of nonexpressive qualities functions either as sufficient or necessary condition for expressive ones. For example, we can account for and explain the liveliness and cheerfulness of a particular piece of music, by pointing to certain relevant nonexpressive features. A particular musical piece is lively because of its fast-paced rhythm and its high volume. Play it slowly and softly, and it loses all its upbeat energy. However fast-pace and loudness can also make for very angry music. These are not, therefore, sufficient conditions for music to be lively. The reason is that "a given set of nonexpressive properties can be compatible with, and constitutive of any one of a *range* of expressive qualities."³² Furthermore, the fast pace and high volume are not necessary conditions either. Soft music with a slow tempo can also be lively.

Tormey is not denying that in a particular artwork the nonexpressive features X, Y, and Z can account for the presence of an expressive quality Q. However the former are not the conditions for Q, and an expressive quality Q cannot be reduced to or defined in terms of nonexpressive properties X, Y, and Z. Hence claims making use of expressive qualities are not reducible to objective, factual claims.

Expressive qualities have the paradoxical feature of seeming to belong to artworks, and artworks appearing to be infused with or embodying them. Hence an expressive quality E can be *directly* conveyed to or partaken of by responsive spectators. By "directly" is not meant "obviously," because E could be subtle. But it means that no convention is needed to recognize E. There are gestures of a despairing man that are directly expressive of grief, like wringing the hands, pulling the hair and

grimacing. These are not culturally accustomed mannerisms, but universal gestures. Contrast this with the sign language of the deaf, where gestures are arbitrarily and by convention assigned a meaning.

E. Gombrich, on the other hand, denies that artworks possess directly exhibited expressive qualities. Artworks, he argues, make use of a "language of symbols rather than 'natural signs'" and are a result of a "developed system of schemata."³³ And since art comprises, or at least makes use of, convention (which he identifies with "style"), knowledge of artists' convention is a *sine qua non* for art appreciation. J. Robinson states that "the essential point that Gombrich makes is that we cannot understand what emotion (or other state of mind) a painting expresses unless we know what style the work is in,"³⁴ and that for him "unless one knows an artist's expressive 'vocabulary'... one cannot understand the expressive significance of his work."³⁵

My brief critical remarks may do little justice to Gombrich's views, but they will clarify my position. We could be thoroughly familiar with art history and the style of the artist in question, and yet be unmoved by his work. Hence knowledge by itself does not suffice, though it often facilitates art appreciation. But sometimes it is quite dispensable. We could sometimes be deeply affected by an artwork of another culture, about whose history and style we know little, as when at the very first exposure a person is deeply moved by Indian classical music. If it were convention that reveals what the emotions are, that are supposed to be conveyed by an artwork, then how come we can sometimes grasp the emotions independently? This fact indicates that emotions can be grasped directly: Critics, sometimes, may concur on the expressive qualities present in an artwork, but disagree about how this work achieves this effect. S. Talmor makes this intriguing remark, "It might indeed make one wonder whether we do not think of reasons to fit our judgments (as Kant claims), rather than *have* reasons to make our judgments."³⁶ In other words, we first see or respond to the expressive quality, and only then explore how the work achieves it. In short, we can *directly* apprehend these qualities. If artworks were not directly expressive, and if style was all, then how come those artists who once imitated successfully the then popular styles of Claude Lorraine and Raphael, yet did not produce convincing and significant works? Venturi, whom I quoted earlier, claims that Cezanne deliberately distorts objects to bring out their vitality and fullness. Surely, someone could paint in Cezanne's style and yet fail to convey this vitality. A style cannot salvage an insipid, inane work.

There is perhaps no theoretical explanation for how a nonvocal musical piece can brim with exultation. The latter, after all, is not some empirical, palpable property of music. Yet it is undeniable that we can experience the exultation of the last movement of Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*. My previous discussion on the participatory nature of aesthetic attention permits me to draw this conclusion: apprehending the expressive quality of exultation requires at least that we be able to partake of joy.

It is the fortuitous fact of how we humans are constituted that can at least partly explain the kinds of emotions we are capable of experiencing. Entertain momentarily this gruesome fantasy. An intelligent, asexual species has evolved which is not composed of two genders and whose members can only reproduce themselves by ripping apart other members and eating their guts. This species would have no inkling of romantic love. Our stirring romantic songs would be nonexpressive to them. We also would find their art nonexpressive. The expressive artworks are expressive from the human point of view, or from those who share our predicament and nature. We could have been so constituted that Beethoven's music would have had no analogue to our longings and aspirations; and such music would then have been rightly judged nonexpressive. Of course it just could not then have been produced. This explains the subjectivity of T2 claims about expressive qualities.

I now examine formal qualities. E. Redslob writes of Poussin's *Jupiter As An Infant*:

The diagonal sweep of the trunk and the horizontal movement of the left branch are rhythmically integrated with the movements of the figures: the branch, the incomparably beautiful arm of the nymph holding the honeycomb and the kneeling satyr's arm stretched along the goat's back form the three strong horizontals of this clear conscious composition.³⁷

The horizontal lines of the branch and the arms of the satyr and the nymph, bring poise and stability, and underpin the harmony of *this* composition. But in another work, the horizontal lines could jar or destabilize or divert attention or disrupt the overall harmony. Does this not show that horizontal lines are not a necessary condition for order and stability, despite them accounting for the poise of this work? It may be objected that, while horizontal lines cannot by themselves bring about harmony and stability, they can do so in conjunction with other qualities. In other words, horizontal lines are one of many necessary conditions. This argument fails, however, because even a painting devoid of prominent horizontal lines can have order and stability.

Consider an example of a formal quality, "complexity." There are no physical traits of a thing, which are a necessary condition for it to be deemed complex. No doubt for specific works, specific physical traits can account for their complexity. In a particular painting, large contrasts, small gradations, and interwoven accords of color account for its complexity. However, even austere paintings could be subtly complex. And there can be a cluttered painting which is merely chaotic without being complex. I will express this point formally and generally. Let us say that several specific physical traits PT account for why an artwork A has a formal quality F. This can be rendered as, "PT > F is true (for A)." However, a different artwork B could possess PT and yet not possess F. For B, PT

> F is not true. And an artwork could achieve F with a vastly different combination of physical traits than PT. PT are not necessary conditions for there to be F. There is no rule for whether or when PT>F is true for an artwork. We cannot say, "Whenever a formal quality F is present; there must also exist physical traits X, Y, and Z."

I repudiate objectivity by showing that formal qualities cannot be equated with physical traits of artworks. I now attempt to establish subjectivity by indicating how our ascribing formal qualities to artworks is built upon the uniquely human response to forms. I propose a plausible though not substantiated hypothesis. It seems to me that there is a psychological basis for why we are so responsive to composition, contrasts, gradation, design and form. Within our psychic lives, we suffer from disharmony by the clashing of opposing drives which tear us apart, from chaos and confusion resulting from not subordinating superfluous impulses to our main aspirations. This very human desire for clarity, harmony and structure within us could be what is requisite for relishing formal qualities in artworks. It would still be a mystery why specific forms move us in specific ways. C. Bell writes, "For a discussion of aesthetics it need be agreed only that forms arranged and combined according to certain unknown and mysterious laws do move us in a particular way, and it is the business of the artists so to arrange them that they shall move us."³⁸

By my hypothesis, our manner of responding to form has something to do with a peculiarity of human nature, namely, with our universal desire to bring clarity and structure within ourselves. Had we thrived on inner chaos and confusion, on inner clash and discord, vastly different would be our response to form. This explains the subjectivity of T2 claims about formal qualities.

M. Friedlander writes about Cranach's nude paintings:

Not the least reason why Cranach's nudes are so inoffensive and respectable is their lack of physical presence and plastic reality. By suspending the laws of nature so to speak, these pictures amused and entertained his patrons... Cranach's idiom is neither classical nor truly romantic,... but an original creation, though with a streak of idiosyncratic quaintness.³⁹

A hodgepodge of positive, negative and neutral terms, like, pleasing, not classical, not romantic, original, and idiosyncratic, are used to explore what is unique about Cranach's nudes, and not to praise or condemn them. However, applying a *judgmental term* is to judge approvingly or disapprovingly the work as a whole. I will discuss the subjectivity of judgmental claims in the reverse order. I first discuss why they could be subjective, and then argue for why they cannot be objective.

These two propositions have already been defended: (1) In many cases the worthiness of an artwork consists in it calling forth and

bringing into play our nobler and higher states of the soul. (2) Claims about high and low states of the soul are not relative. If it can be shown that the nonrelative claims about high states of the soul are subjective, that is, are contingent on how humans are constituted, then many aesthetic value claims would be also ultimately contingent on the latter, and hence subjective.

Two principles regarding high states reveal their subjectivity. I call the first principle the "Limitation Principle," and it is: Nothing that is either unattainable by or contrary to human nature can be a high state. Our nature prescribes a limit to what can be a high state. An analogy: Raging ferocity is anathema to a gazelle's nature, and so its triumphant states could not consist in such a feeling. The second principle I dub the "Flourishing Principle," and it is: High states are inextricably linked with the fulfilling and the flourishing of human nature. At the physical level, what makes our bodies flourish, brings into play their powers and realizes their *telos*, is activity. Hence there is "a high" that comes with exercising. However, what makes for this high state is determined by the nature of our bodies. Had we been organisms that could flourish only by stretching in the sun and being absolutely still, and are hurt by activity, very different would be our high states. Nietzsche gives this reason for rejecting Schopenhauer's "pity principle": "how insipidly false and sentimental this principle is in a world whose essence is will to power."⁴⁰ It is because life is will to power, that higher affirmative states of human soul consist in activity, conquest, self-overcoming and not in pity, abnegation and passivity. The specific point in Nietzsche's argument I find plausible is that while certain states of the soul are certainly high and others low for all humans, what makes for height is determined by what life, or at least what human life is all about. Claims about high and low states are subjective, and hence so are many aesthetic value claims.

Were value claims objective, they would meet one of these two conditions: (a) there exists a "measuring stick" to size and stack artworks, or; (b) there exists some criteria or distinguishing marks to separate good from bad works of art. It will be shown that neither of these two conditions can be met.

These two tenets that I uphold are not at odds: (1) There is no *predetermined* standard to judge and compare the worth of artworks. (2) Great artworks do meet or achieve certain objectives, or if you will, certain standards. In fact to repudiate all standards, would amount to proclaiming all value claims to be relative. Combining the two points, we can say that there are standards, but no predetermined standards for excellence. An illustration of a predetermined standard, is the requirement that the steel wire of size S withstand a tension T to be deemed durable. And how can there be no predetermined standard in art? This is the case when each artwork sets its own standard by which it is to be judged. And how would we know what standards to make use of? The artwork itself reveals or projects the standard by which it is supposed to be judged. We have to respond to each works on its own terms.

Let me illustrate this point. E. Redslob claims that in the

sumptuous *Portrait of George Gisze* Holbein “reached the summit of his powers.”⁴¹ About his rather austere *Portrait of the Man With a Lute*, he writes, “Holbein’s progress as a painter from the portrait of Gisze with its mass of detail to the simple grandeur of the Renaissance portrait is astounding...”⁴² The sumptuousness enhances the Gisze portrait. But its absence is not a defect in his later work, whose grandeur is its simplicity. Each work demands to be evaluated differently by setting its own standard. A work that sets out to be rich and sumptuous, but happens to be merely gaudy, fails. However, if the objective is noble, classic simplicity, then it fails if it is cold and formal. Each work makes it clear to those who are responsive to it, what its peculiar standards are. The projects that Cezanne set for himself in his work are not those set by da Vinci. There is no one measurement for both. The standard by which the worth of an artwork is to be judged is disclosed by attending to it exclusively, and is unique to it. I do not deny that artists are influenced by other artists. Despite this, they could create original and unique works.

Kant titles the forty-sixth chapter of his *Critique of Judgment*, “Beautiful Art is the Art of Genius.” A genius does not follow rules but “gives rule to art.” “Hence originality must be its [i.e., a genius]’ first property... But since it also can produce original nonsense, the product must be models, i.e., exemplary and must serve as a standard or rule of judgment of others.”⁴³ Note: since the genius follows no rule, the model of excellence is not some pre-existent standard which a genius attempts to fulfill. Rather, with the creation of a beautiful work is the paradigm set. This is what J. Burckhardt has to say about the ancient Greek sculptures of gods: “The gods of the Greeks have been a canon of beauty in representing divinity and sublimity in all religions, and the Greek ideal of the gods has become a fact of world historical significance.”⁴⁴ This canon of beauty, however, would not have existed had not the Greeks existed. Such a canon originated with Greek art. Artworks themselves establish the paradigms; they need not be judged by some pre-existent measure.

It may seem likely that at least criteria would exist to distinguish good from bad artworks. It could be required of all good art to have certain positive expressive and formal qualities. There is no doubt that a quality like gracefulness is a positive quality in that, its presence alone in an artwork enhances it. But in some artwork, gracefulness could be out of place.⁴⁵ By interacting with other qualities, it could jar and impair the overall effect. And since no quality is appropriate for all artworks, one cannot predetermine what qualities will enhance a good work. Hence, the T2 value claims meet neither of the two conditions of objectivity.

I have explained how some aesthetic claims are unequivocally true and hence nonrelative, and how all are contingent on human constitution and hence subjective.

Notes:

1. The specific problems with interpreting texts are not dealt with here, but rather with interpreting sensuous artforms like music and painting.
2. Alfred Jules Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, "Introduction" (New York: Penguin Books), p. 28. The Introduction was written in 1946, a decade after the publication of the book.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
4. The contrary of even the apriori claims (which for Ayer, are reducible to a tautologies) cannot be correctly upheld.
5. Depending upon how "universal" is defined, the nonrelative claims as well as the objective ones can be regarded both as universally true and as not. Consider the claim, "This shoe fits me." Unlike claims about what shoes I like wearing, this claim is not relative, because it is unequivocally true or false if a shoe fits me. (I may enjoy wearing an excessively loose non-fitting shoe.) And it can also be said to be universally true by this *first* sense of universal: A universal truth must be accepted to be true by *all* humans. However, it is *not* universally true by this second sense: A universal truth must not merely be accepted to be true by all, but must also express some truth about all humans (to whom this claim is relevant). By this sense, the claim is not universal because what shoes fit me may not fit you. Note also that claims about fitting shoes while nonrelative, are subjective. What makes for a fitting shoe for humans is linked to some specifically evolved traits in humans. We can imagine some alien species whose limbs may require of shoes to accommodate vast wriggling room; and hence what is fitting shoes to them would not be fitting to us. (The attribute "fitting" is analogous to "sweet" or "sour.") This point could be expressed thus. By the *first* sense of universal truth, a nonrelative, but subjective, claim is universally true for all humans (specifically), while the nonrelative, *objective* claim is true for all rational beings. The latter claim is not founded upon or inextricably linked to some characteristics specific to humans.
6. Goran Hermeren, "The Variety of Aesthetic Qualities" in *Contemporary Philosophy of Art*, ed. By J. Bender and H. G. Blocker (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1993). Originally from *Aesthetic Quality and Aesthetic Experience*, M. Mitias, ed. (Amsterdam: Rodopi, B. V., 1988).
7. Monroe Beardsley, *Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism*, 2nd ed. (Hackett Publication, 1981), pp. 41-43.
8. Hermeren, op. cit., p. 265.
9. Edward Bullough, "'Psychical distance' as a Factor in Art and as an Aesthetic Principle" in *Aesthetics: A Critical Anthology*, G. Dickie, R. Sclafoni, R. Roblin, eds. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), p. 321. Originally in *British Journal of Psychology*, 5 (1912).
10. Jerome Stolnitz, "The Aesthetic Attitude" in *Aesthetics: A Critical Anthology*, op. cit., p.335. This selection is from his *Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art Criticism* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1960).
11. *Ibid.*
12. George Dickie, *Introduction to Aesthetics: An Analytic Approach* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 33.
13. *Ibid.*
14. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, translated by J. H., Bernard (New York: Hafner Publications, 1968), p. 101.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 104.
16. Kant claims that we apprehend the sublime "provided we are in security." "He who fears can form no judgment of the sublime..." (*ibid.*, p. 100). But Edmund Burke writes, "Indeed terror is in all cases whatsoever either more openly or latently the ruling principle of the sublime" [*Philosophical Inquiry Into the Origins of the Sublime and the Beautiful*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), p. 58.] I disagree with both. The raging sea, when viewed in complete security from a lighthouse, is only mildly titillating. It must seriously threaten us, but we must continually overcome the fear. It is this heroic state, where we fear and yet remain defiant, that is requisite for the apprehension of the sublime.
17. David Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste" in *Aesthetics, A Critical Anthology*, p. 246.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 250.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 246.
20. Peter Kivy, "Hume's Standard of Taste: Breaking the Circle," *British Journal of Aesthetics* 7 (1967).
21. Noel Carroll, "Hume's Standard of Taste," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 43 (1983).
22. Hume, op. cit., p. 251.
23. Lionello Venturi, *Cezanne* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications), p. 116.
24. Guy Sircello, "Subjectivity and Justification in Aesthetic Judgments," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 45 (1986), pp. 5-6.
25. Bernard Heyl, "Relativism Again," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 5 (1946), p. 56.
26. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols in The Portable Nietzsche*, edited and translated by W. Kaufmann (New York: Penguin Books), p. 561.
27. Winckelmann is quoted by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing in his *Laocoon: An Essay Upon the Limits of Painting and Poetry*, translated by E. Forthingham (New York: The Noonday Press, 1963), p.1.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

31. Alan Tormey, "The Concept of Expression: A Proposal" in *Contemporary Philosophy of Art*(1969), p. 112. The selection is from Tormey's book, *The Concept of Expression* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), p.165
32. *Ibid.*, p. 166.
33. Ernst Gombrich, "Truth and the Stereotype" in *Aesthetics: A Critical Anthology*, p. 522. The selection is from his *Art and Illusion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960).
34. Jennifer Robinson, "Style and Significance in Art History and Art Criticism" in *The Philosophy of the Visual Arts*, P. Alpers, ed. (Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 486. Originally in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 40 (1981).
35. *Ibid.*, p. 482.
36. S. Talmor, "The Aesthetic Judgment and Its Criteria of Value," *Mind*, 72.
37. Edwin Redlslob, *The Berlin-Dahlem Gallery*, translated by S. Wilkins (New York: MacMillan Company, 1967), p. 238.
38. Clive Bell, "Art as Significant Form" in *Aesthetics: A Critical Anthology*, p. 75. The selection is from his *Art* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1914).
39. "Introduction" by Max Friedlander in *The Paintings of Lucas Cranach*, by M. Friedlander and F. Rosenberg (New York: Tabard Press, 1978), p. 23.
40. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, translated by Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1966), aphorism #186.
41. E. Redlslob, op. cit., p. 206.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 207.
43. Kant, op. cit., pp. 150-151.
44. Jacob Burckhardt, *The History of Greek Culture*, translated by P. Hilty (New York: Frederick Ungar Publications, 1963), p. 138.
45. M. Beardsley argues that there are only three qualities which always count as positive: unity, complexity, and intensity (in "On the Generality of Critical Reasons," *The Journal of Philosophy*, 59, 1962). Frank Sibley responds to this by arguing that (1) there is nothing special about these three qualities because there are many which are also deemed positive, and (2) that no positive quality is always positive because, by interacting with other qualities, it could act detrimentally for this work (see "General Criteria and Reasons in Aesthetics" in *Essays in Aesthetics*, J. Fisher, ed., Temple University Press, 1983). G. Dickie supports Sibley, and clarifies the problem in, "Beardsley, Sibley, and Critical Reasons," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 46, 1987