

PSYCHOLOGICAL LITERATURE.

ÆSTHETICS.

Grundzüge der Allgemeinen Aesthetik. DR. STEPHAN WITASEK.
Leipzig, 1904.

In much of its detail the book before us is the ripe fruit of the various psychological studies of feeling and *Einfühlung* which Witasek has published from time to time. In its totality it is a thoroughly logical and consistent development of a standpoint in æsthetics which it is important and desirable to test to the utmost. For this reason the effort is to be heartily welcomed and its very consistency forbids any criticism except that which includes the raising of the fundamental problem involved.

The problem may be stated thus. It has been customary to speak of an æsthetics *and* of a psychology of the æsthetic consciousness. The former was conceived to deal with the meaning or implications of certain attitudes and was, therefore, a worth science; the latter, having, by a process of abstraction, turned the attitudes into states, was thought to be concerned only with the analysis of the conditions of these states. Wherefore, a difference in method was recognized which may be stated tentatively, although unsatisfactorily, in the terms of the older distinction between the teleological and causal methods. Witasek's thesis, on the other hand, is that æsthetics in general (see the title of the book) is identical with the psychology of the æsthetic states, a position by no means new of course, but one which has scarcely been so rigidly followed out before. The way of explanation in æsthetics is, therefore, strictly causal. Any given concrete modification of æsthetic experience is susceptible of explanation only as the product of the working together of certain factors isolated by psychological analysis. As a consequence all the attempts to view the æsthetic experience under unitary 'enlightening' categories, such as play, self-conscious illusion, etc., what may be called appreciative descriptions, are at best pre-scientific and have explanatory value only in so far as they can be reduced to more elementary psychological terms, a task which he attempts and which affords an interesting test of his method. These other methods suffer, he insists, from the smuggling of the worth moment into the æsthetic psychosis itself when as a

matter of fact the elementary æsthetic feeling state is not a worth feeling, worth feelings entering in to modify it only as secondary moments.

Briefly stated his argument runs as follows: In Chapter I., which is concerned with the definition of the fundamental æsthetic fact, it is pointed out that the æsthetic attribute (for instance the typical attribute, beauty) is not an attribute of objects as such, apart from the subject, but rather an attribute which arises out of certain relations of the objects to the subject's feeling attitude. These relations may be of two kinds. The object may be in causal relation to the feeling, or it may be in what he calls *Ziel-relation*, that is, the object *toward which the feeling is directed*. "The æsthetic attribute of an object is then the fact that it stands in causal or *Ziel-relation* to the æsthetic attitude of a subject." The two types of relation which condition the æsthetic feeling should be carefully noted, for we shall return to the distinction in our later criticism. Chapter II., on 'The Æsthetic State of the Subject,' seeks to differentiate the æsthetic state from other states. The important thesis here is that the æsthetic experience is feeling but not worth feeling. The fundamental æsthetic state is not a worth feeling although many modifications of the æsthetic are brought about by the inclusion of secondary worth feelings. This exclusion of æsthetic feelings from the class worth feelings rests upon the view, which he shares with Meinong, that only such feelings as have judgments or assumptions as their presuppositions are worth feelings, a view which I think cannot be maintained but which we cannot stop to criticize at this point. Æsthetic feelings are then presentation feelings. Of the æsthetic attitude, he says, to quote his own words (p. 221), 'Es steht jenseits alles Werthen wenn nicht jenseits aller Werthe.' A second differentia of æsthetic feeling completes the definition. Not all presentation feelings are æsthetic; various sensations, perception and conceptual feelings are not æsthetic. Only intuitive (*anschauliche*) presentation is æsthetic. Those feelings, then, which arise upon intuitive presentation alone are æsthetic—and, since the two dimensional theory of feelings is upheld, there are, strictly speaking, only two fundamental modifications of the æsthetic (beauty and ugliness); all other feelings are pseudo-æsthetic. Two problems thus naturally arise. What are the possible intuitive presentations which may give rise to the fundamental æsthetic reactions, beauty (pleasure) ugliness (unpleasantness), and what are the pseudo-æsthetic factors, judgment (or *Annahme*) feelings, which may enter to produce the other modifications, the tragic, sublime, etc.?

The elementary æsthetic objects are therefore intuitively presented. How shall this characteristic, intuitive, be defined, and what objects fulfill the criterion? The criterion itself is somewhat difficult to define and the writer trusts rather to illustration and his analysis of the groups of objects which fall within the intuitive to make his distinction clear. These are (*a*) simple forms, objects of perception, (*b*) form qualities (*Gestalten*) such as melody, rhythm, spatial symmetry, etc., (*c*) objects with norm suggestion or objects of worth beauty and (*d*) expression (*Stimmung*) or objects of inner beauty (cf. pages 27 and 180). The purely formal character of the first two classes of elementary æsthetic objects is obvious. It is in the last two classes that we find the possibility of the entrance of content factors, in the form of feelings with other presuppositions than presentation, worth feelings. In the former of these, for instance, the object which represents the norm may have beauty merely as intuited object; but in addition to this a 'worth beauty' may enter through the inclusion among the presuppositions of a judgment as to its normal character, a judgment which may be either explicit or merely dispositional (p. 83). In the last class, which includes expression, *Stimmung*, a pleasure, beauty, may arise from the mere intuitive presentation, *Einfühlung* into an object or person of psychical states, but an additional feeling may arise from sympathy, in the form of participation feelings (*Antheilsgefühle*) which arise upon the assumption of, or judgment as to, the existence or non-existence of the psychical states in question and which are, therefore, worth feelings. An original, distinctively æsthetic state may therefore be increased in feeling intensity, through the enlargement of its presuppositions, through the inclusion of pseudo-æsthetic feelings.

It remains now to gather together and classify the different extra-æsthetic moments, judgment and assumption feelings which may enter in to modify the original æsthetic feeling. These are, briefly summarized, (*a*) knowledge worth feelings, such as arise, for instance, in the imitative and the characteristic, both of which involve judgments and neither of which is really an æsthetic moment; (*b*) ethical worth feelings, more particularly the sympathetic participation feelings following upon the judgment of the existence or non-existence of subjective states, pleasure, pain, etc., in others; (*c*) finally a group of feelings to which no distinctive class name is given, following upon the realization of the success or failure in the processes which condition æsthetic experience, for instance, æsthetic *Einfühlung*. This classification by no means does justice to the rather wearisome detail

of the writer's analysis, but it is at least sufficient for the purpose for which it is here adduced, namely, to show the general method of the reconstruction of the concrete modifications of the æsthetic out of these abstract elements.

A few typical illustrations will make this method clear. Beauty, which can be brought under no general formula (although harmony, absence of conflict of the feeling elements which go to make up the concrete, complex æsthetic attitude, is applicable to a wide range of phenomena), is best represented by the second group of æsthetic objects, the *Gestalten*, rhythms, melodies, etc., where the pure intuitive representation is most clearly marked. As soon as the worth feelings, the pseudo-æsthetic worth factors are introduced, the total experience, although it may still be called one of beauty, begins to lean toward other modifications of the æsthetic. Thus 'the tragic,' to treat his definitions most summarily, 'is fundamentally characterized by unpleasant participation-feelings.' "The object which arouses the feeling of sublimity is as such the object of *Einfühlung* on the part of the subject." The content of this projection, he goes on to further specify, is spiritual worths of extraordinary greatness (p. 322). The comic is throughout unæsthetic, although it may enter into an otherwise æsthetic whole. It is made up entirely of worth feelings, sympathetic ethical, and knowledge worth feelings as the result of successful characteristic.

This, in the main, is the synthetic side of Witasek's method. It would not be difficult to find points of criticism in this reconstruction of the concrete modifications of the æsthetic. In particular, one is led to doubt a definition of the fundamental æsthetic which excludes the comic and humorous. But any attempt to criticize these reconstructions in detail, to be of any value, would inevitably involve a minute discussion which the occasion will not permit. Rather let us return to the fundamental question of method. Here we shall find it necessary to take issue on three points: (1) The contention that the æsthetic experience itself is not a worth experience; (2) the consequent exclusion of all appreciative or worth descriptions from the science; (3) the view which underlies the entire procedure, that æsthetics as a science is identical with the psychology of the æsthetic consciousness and therefore includes no type of explanation except the causal.

The fundamental conception that the æsthetic attitude is beyond all valuation if not beyond all values, rests upon the assumption that the necessary presupposition of worth feeling is judgment. Whether this is true or not, is, of course, at bottom a matter of introspection;

but the reviewer, at least, is sure that there exist states of feeling (certain mystical states in religious experience, if no others) where the worth moment is present without any intellectual judgment presupposition being explicitly present, although conative tendencies or dispositions are. The æsthetic state is an attitude, and attitude always involves valuation. Mere intuition, presentation without worth attitude, is an abstraction which may be useful as a relative distinction in analysis but which never appears in reality. Genetically, it is a secondary product of the exclusion of certain conative tendencies which, however, remain latent and constitute the dispositional presuppositions of the æsthetic feeling.

As a worth attitude, therefore, the æsthetic has the right to interpretation as well as causal explanation, *i. e.*, in the very idea of an æsthetic science interpretation is included. The appreciative, functional descriptions, therefore, which were called pre-scientific and reduced to their analytical elements, have as such a place in such a science. Without raising the question of the validity of any of these particular descriptions (such as those which characterize the attitude in terms of freedom, or self-conscious illusion, of play, as dealing with appearance and not reality, etc.) in principle, it is precisely these appreciative descriptions which are the first stages of interpretation. It may be true, from the standpoint of psychological analysis, that we may, as does Witasek, reduce in a negative manner these appreciative descriptions to their psychological elements. We may say that what is meant by freedom and desireless intuition is the absence of judgment presuppositions in our feelings, that the description of the attitude in terms of play, self-conscious illusion and appearance points to the fact that the feelings involved are *Annahmefühle*, follow upon assumptions and not judgments — all this may be true, but there is still a positive side to the description which affords the starting point for the interpretation of the functional significance of the æsthetic attitude in the total mental life. It is quite logical, therefore, that Witasek, in denying the worth character of the æsthetic attitude, should see no functional significance in it except through the inclusion of pseudo-æsthetic factors.

Finally, then, our criticism of Witasek is not so much on the ground of his psychological analysis as because of his conception of æsthetic method which follows upon the exclusion of the æsthetic attitude from the sphere of worths. His recognition, in the introductory chapter, of the fact that the æsthetic attitude rises upon *Ziel*-relation of feeling to object as well as causal, should, it would seem, have led to an en-

largement of method in the direction indicated. Attitude is direction of feeling upon an object, but it is hard to see how there can be this direction of feeling without valuation, either explicit or implicit, being involved. Valuable as the purely analytical method of psychology is, no satisfactory description of the concrete modifications of consciousness is possible without recourse to a method which is functional and, in the larger sense, genetic. Such a method would be part of an 'allgemeine Aesthetik.'

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MUSIC.

Essai sur l'esprit musical. LIONEL DAURIAC. Paris, 1904. Pp. v + 304.

It is a fluently written, easily readable book which Dauriac presents to the public, the result of the observations of a life time. It is written in the manner of Gurney's well known book on the same subject, addressed to the general reader rather than to the professional psychologist. It does not, therefore, attempt to solve any special psychological problems concerning the æsthetics of music, but limits itself to a discussion of the musical abilities of the average hearer who is no professional musician. The author's method consists in gathering the terms in which these abilities are usually described in the language of daily life as well as in modern treatises of musical and philosophical writers and in carefully analyzing their different meanings and adopting the one which seems to be best suited for a clear exposition of the abilities in question. He distinguishes between musical sensation and musical intelligence, meaning by the former the ability to be variously affected by the musical elements as such, by the latter the capacity of comprehending and enjoying the combinations of such elements into 'phrases' or whatever name one might give to such combinations. The book will doubtless be welcomed by those who desire an introduction into the psychology of music in general without being interested in special problems of the science.

Zur Struktur der Melodie. FRITZ WEINMANN. Zeitschrift f. Psychol., 1904, XXXV., 340-379, 401-453.

The article does not contain any *observations* to speak of. The author merely attempts to apply the theory of melody of Lipps to the most common musical phrases and to the major and minor scale. So far as the application of any theory to a mass of more or less disconnected facts must be helpful to the scientist, psychologists will be