

## The Faculty of Feeling

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Diogenes

59(1–2) 21–31

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DOI: 10.1177/0392192112469160

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*Par les soirs bleus d'été, j'irai dans les sentiers,  
Picoté par les blés, fouler l'herbe menue :  
Rêveur, j'en sentirai la fraîcheur à mes pieds.  
Je laisserai le vent baigner ma tête nue.*

*Je ne parlerai pas, je ne penserai rien :  
Mais l'amour infini me montera dans l'âme,  
Et j'irai loin, bien loin, comme un bohémien,  
Par la Nature, – heureux comme avec une femme.  
Rimbaud, *Sensation*.*

### Fields of Aesthetics

Aesthetics has developed, within modern Western culture, as the philosophy of art. Whenever we try to enlarge its field or change its orientation, the horizon of its possible redefinition is delimited by the original conception of the discipline. Consequently there are only three fields available for aesthetics: art, beauty, and feeling, which represent respectively the object, its value, and our cognition of it. Here I will address the third of these, which still remains the least examined among the three.

My subject here is the first domain of aesthetics in the project of its founder A. G. Baumgarten. It was this German philosopher who coined the term 'aesthetics' to denote the hitherto uncultivated field of the philosophy of 'inferior gnoseology,' or the 'science of sensuous cognition' (Baumgarten 2007, §1: 10–11). As the name indicates, the conception was epistemological in the manner of Cartesian philosophy. As a theory of art, it represented a new orientation: instead of objectively analyzing the construction of the work (in the form of a 'poetics'), Baumgarten wished, along with many other theoreticians at that time, to focus on what we experience in art. The object of the inferior gnoseology is the 'clear but not distinct, i.e. only confused' cognition that constitutes such experience. The superior gnoseology, identified by Baumgarten as logic, corresponds to the 'clear and distinct' cognition, so dear to Descartes, that is characterized, according to Leibniz, by the possibility of linguistic definition. By contrast, with 'clear but confused' cognition there is the possibility of recognition but not of definition. In other words, its object is the ineffable (Leibniz 1880: 422–423).

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Under this category of cognition, Leibniz, who systematized different forms of cognition, presents two kinds of object: sensible qualities (such as red or sweet), and the excellence of a painting, i.e. its beauty according to the notion of his times. He does not distinguish between these two as we would do. Though this might seem strange to us, from the viewpoint of the categorization of different types of cognition, Leibniz' claim is understandable, for we do indeed recognize the aesthetic value of a painting, as well as sensible qualities (red or sweet), without being able to define either their quality or value.

Since Baumgarten was aiming at a philosophy of art (or 'liberal arts' in his terms), especially literary art, he dropped the simple sensible qualities from the objective sphere of his aesthetics. Even with this focus, he limited himself to talking about the 'analogon of reason,' without specifying the faculty peculiar to this sensuous cognition. We recall Pascal, who presented a similar conception a century before. 'We come to know truth,' he writes, 'not only by reason, but even more by our heart; it is through this second way that we know first principles. [...] Principles are perceived by intuition (*se sentir* = be felt); propositions are proved' (*Pensées*, #214 ed. Lafuma = #282 ed. Brunschvicg). In this Pascalian dichotomy of reason and heart, the heart is deeply colored with ethical emotions such as love and courage: indeed, his love of God inspires tears of joy. I would propose instead the faculty of feeling as the agent of sensuous cognition, in order to *assure* the aesthetic dimension vis-à-vis the ethical. Baumgarten (2007, §14: 20–21) himself took this orientation when he defined beauty as 'the perfection of the sensuous cognition as such.' It is evident that this apparently strange definition<sup>1</sup> is intended to define beauty as a particular mode of sensuous cognition, in accordance with his project of aesthetics. This intention is corroborated by the following phrase: 'a thing that is ugly itself can be beautifully thought and something that is more beautiful uglily'<sup>2</sup> (§18: 22–23). He focuses on the autonomous dimension of artistic expression, which should be perceived sensuously. What I call here the 'faculty of feeling' designates this agent of sensuous perception. In some contexts, this faculty can simply be called 'sensitivity,' though this may be ambiguous: applicable from Rousseau's ethics to Kant's receptive function of sensory organs. My object here, then, is to fill in the most fundamental lacuna in modern aesthetics.<sup>3</sup>

## Analysis of the act of feeling

The semantic field of the verb 'to feel' is wide. Let us examine the following cases, which I hope will cover those most relevant to our subject.

1. I felt a sharp pain in my fingertip.
2. I feel there is something particular in Yves Klein's blue.
3. I feel the color of the Mediterranean in Yves Klein's blue.
4. I felt a certain loneliness in this poor village.
5. Entering the room, I felt the presence of someone.
6. At his words, I felt a sudden hate.
7. Feeling genuine warmth in his invitation, I accepted it.
8. Velvet feels smooth.
9. This poor village feels lonely.

Example 1, designating corporeal sensation, is a basic case. It seems too neutral and commonplace to afford any particular help in our investigation. If we compare it with #2, however, we are brought to an important discrimination. Example 2 represents what we call aesthetic

perception. Its object is a sensible quality, but we do not use the verb ‘to feel’ for a simple visual perception of blue or red. It is not a simple sensible quality but rather ‘something particular’ in it that we feel. This suggests already the difference between feeling and perception, and the essential relationship between feeling and the aesthetic. Setting it in parallel with #1 seems to suggest that feeling Klein’s blue is physically internalized somehow like a pain. While we perceive the sharpness of a needle and attribute this perception to the object, we feel the pain in ourselves. Likewise we indeed taste, inwardly, this something particular to IKB (International Klein Blue).

With regard to this inwardness, we should recall how the English ‘to feel’ and the German ‘fühlen’ are related to tactility. ‘To lose feeling’ concerns only the sense of touch; in the case of vision we use the expression ‘to lose sight.’ French however privileges the senses of smell and taste, without excluding the sense of touch.

10. J’ai ressenti une douleur vive au bout du doigt. (The same meaning as #1 above.)
11. Je sens une rose. (I smell a rose.)
12. Ce drap sent la lavande. (This sheet smells like lavender.)
13. Ce vin sent l’aigre. (This wine tastes sour.)<sup>4</sup>

I believe, however, that this is less a matter of the difference between languages than of the mode of cognition peculiar to feeling, which characterizes the so-called ‘lower senses,’ such as the senses of smell, taste, and touch.

The ‘something particular’ in #2 expresses this particular mode of feeling, so much so that we shall hereafter refer to this as the canonical case of feeling. So far as we simply perceive the blue of Yves Klein, it concerns neither feeling nor the aesthetic. To qualify it as ‘something particular’ is to take notice of its ineffable quality, which appeals to us to look and appreciate. Ineffability presupposes this appeal that incites and defies us to name it: what is unworthy of attention is not ineffable. Example 3 is an attempt to formulate this. However, there can be no definitive qualification, since, if there were, such a quality would be ‘clear and distinct’ and not ineffable.

The aesthetic power of the blue tempts us, so to speak, to stay and ponder over it. It is remarkable, because the feeling is an immediate response to the perceptive stimuli: we don’t consider feeling a response we would arrive at only after reflection. Feeling is immediate and lasts a moment. Because of the duration of such a lingering, feeling is reflexive. In the first place, we reflect upon the state of feeling itself: what Kant called the reflective judgment. But there is a further step. As the ineffable is a temptation for us to grasp it linguistically, we look back in our memory to our store of past experiences. It is only someone who had once appreciated the blue of the Mediterranean, probably at Nice, who could pronounce #3. Children, having a small store of past experience, will feel less. Feeling requires maturity.

Example 4 also formulates an objective quality like Yves Klein’s blue, but this quality (being ‘lonely’) is more affective. The affective concerns our existence as beings-in-the-world, and is an impure feeling by Kantian standards. Objectivity and affectivity seem to exclude one another, since objectivity can be regarded as constituted by its distance from our existential concerns. I wish however to postpone this discussion to the occasion of intransitive cases (#8 and, especially, #9), which seem to imply the objectivity of loneliness. Here I limit myself to acknowledging, in this affective feeling, the reflexive character that we have identified with regard to the aesthetic quality. When we say ‘I felt a certain loneliness in this poor village,’ instead of the simple phrase ‘the village was lonely,’ we indeed appreciate and taste the loneliness, probably through consulting our memory of similar experiences.

Example 5 represents a very complex judgment constituting a feeling. I notice no figure in the room, but in spite of that, I feel someone is there. Such a judgment is based on ‘signs’ of presence. They are most often very slight and vague: the low noise a bodily movement might produce, a breathing or a rustling, a faint stream of air, a delicate difference in temperature, the slight scent of perfume, etc. From these signs we make an immediate and synthetic judgment in the form of a feeling. At least in Hollywood movies, such an intuition is never mistaken; it is rather the rational judgment relying on the visual evidences that makes a mistake. We cannot but *feel* the presence of someone, because the intuition is confused: we cannot bring forth any precise evidence for the judgment. But in fact, the judgment is deeply mental, relating a very keen sensitivity to a rich repertory of memory of subconscious experiences. Such non-sensuous feeling is not exceptional. We can quote such phrases as ‘I felt him to be a good teacher’ and ‘I feel the existence of God’ in the Lutheran sense. Besides, this delicate working of feeling probably occurs in #2 as well.

Example 6 formulates feeling as an emotive reaction, and in #7 the reaction is extended to an action. Many people would take emotion for the standard form of feeling, probably because of the strength of such feeling, which passes into an outer act. According to this notion, feeling is essentially subjective, in a sense still to be determined.

### Ambivalence of feeling

The analysis of feeling above has left one point not discussed: the authenticity of emotion as feeling (#7 and #9). By emotion I particularly designate an affective feeling leading to an outer reaction, such as hate. Although a feeling, emotion does not seem to be of the same nature as the aesthetic feeling (the ‘something particular’ of Y. Klein’s blue). To clarify this, we have now to recapitulate the results of the analysis of feeling made above. We have recognized the following about feeling:

- (a) Feeling is to be distinguished from perception (particular blue and simple blue).
- (b) There is a close relationship between feeling and the aesthetic.
- (c) Feeling favors, because of its inwardness, the lower senses: those of smell, taste, and touch.
- (d) This fact should be interpreted in terms of the mode of cognition peculiar to feeling.
- (e) The peculiarity of the mode of cognition in feeling consists in its finding the nature of the object ineffable.
- (f) As the ineffable incites us to try to formulate its character, we linger on the object to appreciate and taste it.
- (g) Therefore, albeit that it is an immediate response to the perceived object, feeling lasts.
- (h) As, during this appreciative moment, the perceptual qualities of the object are measured with reference to past experiences in memory, feeling is reflexive and mental (not sensuous).

This recapitulation shows already a tendency to favor the aesthetic rather than emotion. The reason can be found in (e) to (h), which characterize feeling with regard to the link between the ineffability of the object and the appreciation of its impression. As a leading thread, we can take Kant’s analysis of the process of aesthetic judgment. As is well known, what he calls ‘aesthetic judgment’ is the case where in the proposition ‘A is good’ the predicate is replaced by the psychic state of pleasure, which is the result of ‘free play between imagination and understanding’ (Kant 1987, §9: 61–64). According to Kant’s schema, our sensibility receives the sense data of an object,

from which imagination forms its image, to which understanding relates a proper concept: it is the process of perception such as ‘A is a tree.’<sup>5</sup> In other words, with the predicative concept given by understanding, the process of perception arrives at its terminus. The predicate being acquired, we abandon the object. What Kant means by ‘free play between imagination and understanding’ is, on the contrary, that we continue to gaze at this pleasing object. His formulation does not exclude that we effectuate a perception.<sup>6</sup> We know that this object is a sunflower, for example. But unlike the case of simple perception, our imagination continues to perform its function, which consists in forming the image of the object; in other words, we continue to gaze at it.

This duration of our gaze is produced by the attractive character: the beauty, of the object. Kant translated the beautiful into the psychic state of pleasure, or the ‘free play between imagination and understanding.’ Thus our consciousness can be grasped in two opposite orientations: as being oriented to the beautiful object, or to our psychic state. While the first orientation is perceptive, the second is reflexive. Visual experience favors the first, and the experience of the lower senses, taste in particular, concentrates on the second, which consists in tasting all the details and nuances of the presentation (image). But the inward orientation is best represented by the ethical emotions. We keep hate for a certain moment against the villain on the stage, and during this time we are feeling a strong emotion, which we relate to the villain. Feeling is really ambivalent, and we cannot discriminate between ethical emotion and aesthetic feeling.

## Feeling and emotion

It is now time to consider the ethical emotion, which presents the strongest psychic agitation. In fact we say ‘I feel hate’ (#6). Yet something is different in such an emotion from the aesthetic feeling on which we have concentrated our inquiry. The striking fact is that an emotion like hate does not arise from the ineffability of the object. Let us consult the classical analysis by Descartes.

An emotion such as hate belongs to what Descartes called the passions of the soul. He conceived the order of the fundamental passions in terms of the interest we have in the object concerned. First comes surprise (or ‘admiration’), which announces to us that something new is happening. Then, according to whether this object is good or bad for us, the passions with which we react can be divided into two types: love and joy on the one hand (for a good object), hate and sadness on the other (for a bad object), with desire as the common impetus (Descartes 1988, Part 2, esp. §§69–95). As these passions, including hate, are defined in terms of the relation of goodness or badness that holds between the object and our existence, they are ethical, and colored by our interest.<sup>7</sup> Being ethical does not prevent the emotion from being feeling. But we can at least say that the emotion is impure as feeling, because of its interest-charged character, which incites us to transcend feeling to action.

Therefore the aesthetic feeling and the ethical emotion arise in different ways. While the aesthetic feeling is produced and conserved by the ineffability of the object, the ethical emotion is caused by an intuition of a new situation relevant to our existence; therefore this emotion does not need to gaze at the object. In the second place, emotion as feeling does not require any specific faculty to be felt. Everyone, without exception, knows love and hate. In this sense, these emotions are universal. In contrast, the aesthetic feeling, based on a specific faculty, dominates a territory of delicateness and nuance. For these reasons (their origin and their faculty), we can exclude emotion from our inquiry. We must, however, acknowledge that the emotive can be aesthetic insofar as it is perceived as an objective quality. In this respect, the intransitive use of ‘to feel,’ such as we see in #8 and #9, or #12 and #13 in French, is interesting. These cases should throw light on the essential role of sensuous perception in feeling. I will repeat the relevant examples.

4. I felt a certain loneliness in this poor village.
8. Velvet feels smooth.
9. This poor village feels lonely.
12. Ce drap sent la lavande. (This sheets smells like lavender.)
13. Ce vin sent l'aigre. (This wine tastes sour.)

The following discussion will focus on a comparison between #9 and #4 (*I felt a certain loneliness in this poor village*). The other three represent the link between the verb 'feel/sentir' and a particular sense such as the sense of touch (#8), of smell (#12) and of taste (#13), the last two in French. I will not deal with these three, but they imply the same problem as #4 and #9: knowing whether the loneliness is my emotion or a property of the village. The question concerns the possibility of an object, such as a village, having a 'feeling.' In other words, the problem is to know if #9 is identical with #4 and if #4 could be paraphrased by the following two sentences.

14. This poor village makes me feel lonely.
15. I feel myself lonely in this poor village.

In this gloss, the loneliness as feeling is nothing but my emotion or psychic state, and to understand the loneliness of the village, I have to feel lonely. Is this the case? Isn't it true that, without being myself lonely, I can perceive the loneliness of the village? The intransitive use of 'feel' seems to express this relationship between the fact and I. The typical case is #8, which describes the feel of the material irrespective of my emotion. This may explain to a certain extent how an emotion is perceived as an aesthetic feeling in a case such as a 'sad melody.'<sup>8</sup> Nelson Goodman relates feeling to perception as follows:

To some extent, we may feel how a painting looks as we may see how it feels. The actor or dancer—or the spectator—sometimes notes and remembers the feeling of a movement rather than its pattern, insofar as the two can be distinguished at all. Emotion in aesthetic experience is a means of discerning what properties a work has and expresses. (Goodman 1976: 248)

This may appear confusing, because of the use of the word 'emotion.' In this quote, composed of three sentences, Goodman talks about the interpenetration and the complementary reciprocity of perception and feeling, emphasizing the part of feeling. What I have discussed above is the reverse of his point: a matter of 'seeing how a painting feels.' Goodman's words are especially suggestive to elucidate how feeling intervenes in this cognitive process and how it functions. Beginning the first sentence with 'to some extent,' he suggests the limit of this complementary character of perception and feeling. It is evident that the limit lies on the side of feeling: while anyone endowed with sight can perceive something is red, not everyone arrives at a feeling of the sadness of a melody. As we have noticed above, the faculty of feeling is literally facultative. The second sentence mentions an experience dear to us: it may be called a bodily sensitive perception. Here the limitation given by 'insofar as' refers to the tight combination of perception and feeling.

The third sentence is problematic. I think many readers reading the quotation out of context would feel they had missed the logical line of my argument. The problem consists in the fact that Goodman identifies feeling with emotion. If we take this into account, the meaning of the sentence will be clear. Goodman generalizes the meaning of the preceding example: by means of 'emotion,' such as the feeling of a bodily movement in dance, we can grasp the work's properties, such as the

pattern of a movement. Though disagreeing about his use of the word ‘emotion,’<sup>9</sup> I find that Goodman’s assertion suggests a further understanding of the genesis of feeling from perception. There is a simple perception (ordinary blue) and a perception producing a feeling (IKB). This problem belongs, in Goodman’s term, to the subject of expression and metaphor.

## Feeling as responsive resonance

Firstly, I shall summarize Goodman’s theory of expression. His examples are the gray of a painting (simple perception) and its sadness (expression of an emotion). Both represent the type of reference we call ‘exemplification’: gray and sadness are not simply denoted but are indeed possessed by the painting. But their modes of possession are different.

[Instead] of saying the picture expresses sadness I might have said that it is a sad picture. Is it sad, then, in the same way that it is gray? A notable difference is that since, strictly speaking, only sentient beings or events can be sad, a picture is only figuratively sad. A picture literally possesses a gray color, really belongs to the class of gray things; but only metaphorically does it possess sadness or belong to the class of things that feel sad.<sup>10</sup> (Goodman 1976: 50–51)

This metaphorical character of the possession makes the case of sadness an expression, which is a subclass of ‘exemplification.’ Expression being metaphorical exemplification, we should ask how the exemplification works. Here we refer to Goodman’s famous example of a swatch of cloth. A swatch has many properties in common with the bolt of cloth it exemplifies. ‘But a swatch does not exemplify all its properties; it is a sample of color, weave, texture, and pattern, but not of size, shape, or absolute weight or value’ (Goodman 1976: 53). The exemplification thus presupposes a selection of properties to exemplify. ‘The picture,’ he says, ‘*does not denote* the color gray *but is denoted by* the predicate “gray.”’ (52). It is the predicate (here ‘gray’) that makes the selection of the property. We should ask, then, from where the predicate comes. Why does the predicate ‘small’ (size) or ‘square’ (shape) not apply to the swatch? Here is Goodman’s answer.

Normally, a swatch exemplifies only sartorial properties while a picture literally exemplifies only pictorial properties and metaphorically exemplifies only properties that are constant relative to pictorial properties.<sup>11</sup> (Goodman 1976: 86)

This answer is clear but far from being satisfactory. He claims that the screening of the relevant properties<sup>12</sup> is done in terms of the existing, or prevailing concept of the object (such as a tailored suit or a painting). The case of the swatch is completely explained in this way. It will also serve as an explanation of the case of a traditional painting. In the case of a color field painting, such as Klein’s *Monochrome blue sans titre* series, this explication applies to a certain extent: color is one of the basic ‘pictorial properties.’ But the most striking property of the series is, or at least was at the time when it was a new style, the absence of such ‘pictorial properties’ as line and shape. We can say that it is still pictorial properties that serve as a principle in the selection of relevant properties, but in a negative form. Even if we conserve Goodman’s formulation, we should inscribe the case of negative properties, of which the reach would be very long, in order to encompass the really creative dimension of feeling. The most important function we expect from feeling is the grasping of something fresh, new, and ineffable, which is beyond the scheme of Goodman, who bases the selection of relevant properties on the ordinary notion of the object concerned, such as a tailored suit or a painting. We can even say that the prime field of feeling lies beyond any expectations.

With regard to this, however, I wish to follow Goodman in a radical way. My answer is found in the remark by Goodman cited above, slightly modified as follows, and understood in a strict sense: ‘we may feel how a painting looks, so that feeling in aesthetic experience can be a means of discerning what properties a work has and expresses.’

My gloss is as follows. An object, such as a painting, or even a poor village, that is, any object or scenery or situation that can be experienced aesthetically, i.e. in the way of feeling, can arouse in us a feeling because of its perceptive properties, such as colors, lines, shapes, materiality, and age, their combination, their disposition, and their density, etc. The more complex is the combination of perceptual qualities, the closer their cognition comes to feeling. A simple perceptive property is only perceived as such without arousing any feeling. A prosaic blue cannot be the object of feeling. To be felt, the blue has to have something particular. The basic position of example #2 – ‘I feel there is something particular in Yves Klein’s blue’ – is thus corroborated. Feeling is born from this perceptual deviation, which is measured by reference to the whole of one’s past experiences, including those experiences lying unnoticed in subconscious memory. While a perception is projected onto the outer object, we feel in ourselves. Feeling is a resonance that arises spontaneously in our mind in response to the perceptual stimuli. The ‘something particular’ in Klein’s blue is such a resonance. There is not one ‘something’ as such: it will vary from person to person. This particularity depends on how many and what kinds of memories are stirred up in response to the stimulus of the perceptual properties of the object. Feeling is given as an overtone of perception, and its faculty consists in the flexibility, ease, extent, and variety of this stirring.

I wish to remark that this genetic process corresponds to what Kant called reflective judgment: ‘if only the particular is given, and judgment has to find the universal for it, then this power is merely reflective’ (Kant 1987, Introduction, IV: 18–19). We easily identify here the ‘universal’ with the beautiful, which is the pleasing psychic state of harmony between imagination and understanding. Such a process is, in fact, open to any stirring of feeling. When the aroused feeling is particular and unique, strong and ineffable, we qualify its object as beautiful.

## **Freshness, individuality, and universality of feeling**

Aesthetic judgment is more a bodily process than a mental operation because of the cardinal role played in it by memory. To talk of memory is to talk of the bodily working of the mind: I am skeptical whether a pure spirit can have memory. All our past experiences are latent in the form of memory, and ready to react with fresh perceptual stimuli. Memory is incarnated time. Depending on past experience, and most probably on inborn tendencies and character also, memory is disposed to variations in sensitivity: there are strongly charged points and less charged ones. I am very sensitive to the nuances of blue, you to the darkness; he reacts particularly to the justice of behavior, she to gentleness, and so on. The faculty of feeling is the readiness and flexibility of such reactions.

When a reaction comes from a deep or a very individual point, the feeling is fresh. To repeat Goodman’s proposition with the slight modification I mentioned above: ‘feeling in aesthetic experience is a means of discerning what properties a work has and expresses.’ In other words, such freshness has a heuristic function, especially in aesthetic experience. We know that an interpretation by a critic blessed with a keen and delicate sensibility can reveal to us a new image of a work.

This character of feeling prompts us to define it as a typically individual form of cognition. Indeed, it is widely believed that I feel differently from you, and you from him, etc. It is noteworthy that universality is generally ascribed to beings above or below the human: according to Pascal, to angels as pure spirits and to beasts as pure bodies. In fact we easily believe in the universality of logical relations and instincts such as appetite and sexual desire. Human beings, compounded of



body and spirit, constitute the field of individuality. This is especially the case with feeling, which derives from the combination of spirit/mind and body. But, as we have no means of precisely comparing one person's feeling with another's, this individuality remains simply a belief. As we find in artistic experience, it is rather banality that dominates people's reactions, and we should be careful not to conceive an uncritical faith in the individuality of feeling. We have indeed recognized the universality of certain emotions such as love and hate, which might be regarded as expressions of appetite and desire. It is important that even a very individual feeling be communicable. Otherwise we cannot learn even from a gifted critic about a work of art. We should, then, explain how this communicability of feeling comes about.

Generally speaking, this communicability is a matter of the wider enigma of how we can understand other people at all; in the sense in which an unfortunate person might say 'You don't understand me.' However, this is a problem the answer to which we cannot, by definition, verify. How can we prove that vis-à-vis the death of a common friend, for example, my sadness is different from or identical with yours? The only thing we can ask is whether this is communicable or not. Most probably, so far as the details or nuances are concerned, my feeling is different from yours. Nevertheless, there is something of feeling, most often ineffable, we do share with other people. It is this fact of communicability of feeling that is relevant, and it is especially the case with aesthetic experience. Without this possibility, we could neither mature in aesthetic feeling, nor learn any new way of perceiving the same work, as, in fact, we do.

I believe the basis of the communicability of feeling is quite simple and easy to conceive. Albeit that each person's memory may contain different areas of intensity or emphasis, most people share the same points or subjects. By 'points or subjects' I mean the following. Someone is very sensitive to blue (here blue is a point or subject), for example, and consequently he/she has a rich repertory of blue in their memory, such as a Mediterranean blue, the blue of a tropical sky, the blue of the winter sky in the far north, the lapis lazuli of a Piero della Francesca, the deep blue in the painting of Kōrin Ogata (尾形光琳), and of course divers IKB. But another person, while not exceptionally sensitive to blue, still knows blue, and keeps in his/her memory a few kinds of blue. The latter can begin to perceive a particular blue by following a description made by the former, and then even arrive at feeling it for themselves.

This personal difference in feeling can be translated to the level of culture. As an experiential fact, the faculty of feeling or sensibility differs between cultures. People from one culture often feel differently from people belonging to a different culture. This means that, with regard to feeling, cultural deviations are often wider than personal ones. The most important element in such cultural difference in feeling is probably language: it is not a matter of blood. In any case, just as with the above-mentioned case of personal difference, I believe we can and, indeed, do overcome the frontier of cultural difference in feeling to a certain extent, and we can communicate our feelings beyond personal and cultural differences.

## Notes

- 1 The ordinary definition should be 'the sensuous cognition of the perfection,' in which 'the perfection' is the quality of the object. This ordinary version was adopted by Baumgarten himself in his earlier book *Metaphysica* (1739), §662 (to which he refers in *Aesthetica*, §14), following the conception of Leibniz and the explicit definition Ch. Wolff gave in his *Psychologia empirica* (1732), §545 (I owe these data to a note by Hiroshi Matsuo in his integral Japanese translation of Baumgarten's *Aesthetica* [Tokyo 1987: 490–491]). It was a standard definition, which was adopted by Moses Mendelssohn in his *Betrachtungen über die Quellen und die Verbindungen der schönen Künste und Wissenschaften*, 1757. It was this version that Kant criticized as the opinion of 'famous philosophers' in §15 of his *Critique of Judgment*.

- 2 The idea is in line with Aristotle and Boileau.
- 3 I have myself used ‘sensibility’ in this sense; see, e.g., Sasaki (2009). I wish to add that the concept of ‘the faculty of feeling’ comes from the vocabulary of modern aesthetics in Japan. We are accustomed to gloss the etymological meaning of ‘aesthetics’ as ‘science of *kansei*’: the word *kansei* (感性) was coined, from two Chinese characters, in analogy to *risei* (理性, reason) and *gosei* (悟性, understanding), and I try here to translate it back into English as the faculty of feeling. Moreover, the Japanese word has achieved some circulation in the Western world in the context of ‘*kansei engineering*,’ which aims at producing sensuously good commodities.
- 4 Incidentally, the use of the Japanese verb *kanjiru* (感じる) is similar to the English ‘to feel.’ We would use *kanjiru* only in examples 1–10; for 11 we would use the verb *kagu* (嗅ぐ, to smell), and for 12 and 13 we adopt the locution ~の匂い/味がする (‘to give a smell/taste’).
- 5 Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, ‘Transcendental Analytics,’ esp. §§22–27 (2nd ed.). Cf. also the passage in the *Critique of Judgment* mentioned in the preceding note.
- 6 The subject of §9 of his *Critique of Judgment* is ‘the question whether in a judgment of taste the feeling of pleasure precedes the judging of the object or the judging precedes the pleasure.’ To this question, Kant answers: ‘this merely subjective (aesthetic) judging... precedes the pleasure’ (62).
- 7 Descartes does not ignore the aesthetic dimension. Indeed he differentiates the case of beauty and ugliness from that of goodness and badness as *agrément* and disgust instead of love and hate (§85). But they include the moment of desire as well. As to Descartes’ conception of the aesthetic, his notion of ‘intellectual joy,’ with which he explains the pleasure we get from a tragedy or an elegy (§147), is more interesting. I once published a Japanese paper on Descartes’ aesthetics (Sasaki 1970).
- 8 There is a remarkable difference between sadness and ‘fear and pity’ (Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1453b). While sadness can be the aesthetic quality of an object, ‘fear and pity’ can never be objective. The fear and pity I feel towards Oedipus on the stage is a real ethical reaction or judgment I am making on such a horrible situation. There is no other reason that makes these emotions aesthetic but the fact that, being spectator, I am contemplative and not engaged in the real action. Though interesting, this should be the subject of another paper.
- 9 The examples of emotion Goodman cites elsewhere are: fear, hatred, disgust, and sadness (1976: 146, 85).
- 10 I reserve one point in this quote. I am not sure if ‘only sentient beings or events can be sad.’ Adding ‘or events,’ the author seems to think of ‘he is sad,’ rather than ‘I am sad.’ I think that the case of ‘sentient beings’ and the case of ‘events’ are different. I must be sad to be able to say that this accident is sad, while it is a pure and simple perceptive cognition to assert that he is sad, and I need not be sad myself. In this sense, I find no categorical difference between ‘he is sad,’ and ‘this picture is sad.’
- 11 Here ‘gray’ belongs to the ‘pictorial properties,’ and ‘sad’ to the ‘properties that are constant relative to pictorial properties.’ On this distinction, cf. Goodman (1976: 42).
- 12 As for the notion of relevance, we have an insightful speculation on the topic and an analysis of it in Sperber & Wilson (1986). See also Grice (1975).

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