

PHILOSOPHY OF EMOTION

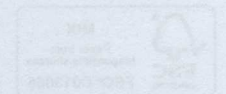
# PHILOSOPHY OF EMOTION

Critical Concepts in Philosophy

*Edited by*  
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**Volume III**  
**Morality, Aesthetics and the Emotions**

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## INTRODUCTION

Angelika Krebs

### Morality and the emotions

I am happy to serve my friends, but unfortunately do so from inclination.

And so it often vexes me that I am not a virtuous man.

(Friedrich Schiller)

How are morality and the emotions related to each other? The contemporary debate on this question begins in the early 1960s with two landmark articles, P. F. Strawson's "Freedom and resentment" and Bernard Williams' "Morality and the emotions." Both deplore the philosophical neglect of the topic; however, they identify different reasons for this neglect.

P. F. Strawson (1919–2006) was the Waynflete Professor of Metaphysics at Magdalen College, Oxford. His most famous books are *Individuals* (1959) and *The Bounds of Sense* (1966). His obituary in the *Guardian* noted that Oxford was the world capital of philosophy between 1950 and 1970, with American academics flocking there, rather than the traffic going the other way, and that this golden age had no greater philosopher than Sir Peter Strawson.

His 1960 address to the British Academy, "Freedom and resentment," is easily the most influential article written on the topic of emotions and morality in the last 50 years. In this article, Strawson diagnoses the tendency among his fellow philosophers to over-estimate the importance of metaphysical issues like freedom and determinism, as if the future of our moral life depended on the thesis of determinism being false. Against this tendency, Strawson stresses the great importance we attach to the attitudes that other human beings have towards us and the great extent to which our personal feelings and attitudes are shaped by our beliefs about these attitudes. It matters to us immensely, he argues, whether others, especially some particular others, show goodwill, affection, and esteem towards us, or contempt, indifference, and malevolence. We naturally react to these attitudes with what he calls, "personal reactive attitudes." "Moral reactive attitudes" are vicarious, impersonal, or generalized analogues of personal reactive attitudes, for instance, when we react on behalf of another with resentment to a person who

has offended this other. There are also, to complement the scene, "self-reactive attitudes" like guilt and shame.

Strawson claims that, as reactive attitudes form the very fabric of human life, nothing can repudiate them, not even the truth of determinism; nothing can mean the end of gratitude, resentment, and forgiveness, and the end of all reciprocated adult loves and all the essentially "personal" antagonisms. Special considerations might lead us to suspend a particular reactive attitude and assume an *objective attitude* instead; we might, for example, suspend our resentment toward a person once we learn that she did not know what she was doing, could not help it, was not herself at the time, was only a child, or was schizophrenic. Yet the general framework of reactive attitudes cannot be subject to review without us losing our humanity, or so Strawson argues.<sup>1</sup>

Bernard Williams (1929–2003), who was perhaps *the* most prominent moral philosopher of his time, cites other reasons for the neglect of the topic of emotions and morality in his 1965 inaugural lecture "Morality and the emotions" at Bedford College, London. Williams blames, first, philosophy of language for its preoccupation with the fact-value-distinction and, consequently, with very general features of moral language, linguistic activities like "commendation," "evaluation," and "prescription," or very general terms as "good," "right," and "ought." The second reason he emphasizes is in fact a combination of two things: one, a rather simple view of the emotions, as if they were just blank occurrences like certain kinds of bodily sensations, and, two, a deeply Kantian view of morality, as if morality was just the exercise of the free, rational will.

Williams names and confronts the three standard Kantian objections against granting the emotions a central role in morality, thus setting the stage for the whole discussion that follows. Williams himself sides with Aristotle claiming that an admirable human being should be disposed to have certain kinds of emotional responses and not others.<sup>2</sup> The three basic Kantian objections are:

- 1 The emotions are too *capricious* and partial; acting out of benevolence toward this person, but not toward that, is irrational and unjust. Moral action, in contrast, is consistent action, implemented on principle.
- 2 The emotions are too *passively experienced*; they happen to us, we are not responsible for them, whereas moral worth and responsibility can be attached only to what we freely do, to those respects in which we are rationally active.
- 3 The emotions are too *fortuitously distributed* by nature; some find that the human gesture comes naturally, some do not. To make moral worth dependent on such features of character makes the capacity for moral worth a species of natural advantage, which is both logically incompatible with the notion of the *moral* as well as "hideously unfair."

Williams concedes that Kant's *capriciousness* objection (1) is partly right, but insists that this only refutes the view that emotional motivation has everything to do with moral worth, not the view that it has something to do with it. Kant's objection is, however, also partly wrong. According to Williams, Kant has too crude a

view of the emotions. Emotions differ from many bodily sensations, in that they usually include a reference to an object and a thought. This means that they can be adjusted in the light of other considerations and are not necessarily capricious and partial in a bad sense. In a contrary direction, Williams attacks the blank regard for *consistency* in Kantian morality as wooden and even insolent, quoting John Maynard Keynes' "principle of equal unfairness" (if you can't do a good turn for everybody in a certain situation, you shouldn't do it for anybody).

In response to the *passivity* objection (2), Williams holds not only that emotionally motivated action can itself be free, but also that some element of passivity makes a vital contribution to the notion of moral (and other) *sincerity*; we see a man's genuine convictions as coming from somewhere deeper within than his decisions. These very Williamsian points, explored in many other of his writings, for example, in "Moral incapacity,"<sup>3</sup> are dealt with at length in the first part of "Morality and the emotions," while the answer to Kant constitutes only its much briefer second part.

The first part of the article criticizes "emotivism," but it also "steals" from it. *Emotivism* is the thesis, familiar from A. J. Ayer and C. L. Stevenson, that the function and nature of moral judgments is to express the emotions of the speaker and to arouse similar emotions in her listeners. In an intricate discussion of different semantic and pragmatic versions of emotivism, Williams presents the counter-example of a man who, quite insincerely and to please an illiberal host, says "homosexuals ought to be flogged." As this man thereby undoubtedly made a moral judgment, emotivism must be false. Yet Williams finds a grain of truth in emotivism too; namely, that sincere, serious moral judgments rely for their identification, among other things, on the strength of the feelings displayed.

Returning to the *passivity* objection, Williams adds by way of a second reply that someone who receives good treatment from another appreciates this more and thinks better of the giver if he knows it to be the product of an emotional response, rather than the result of the application of principle; we do prefer the *human gesture*! Needless to say, this remark is a forerunner of Williams' famous "one thought too many"-argument in "Persons, character, and morality," where he writes that a man should save his wife rather than a stranger from peril (if he can save only one of them), because she is his wife, and not because morality permits him to save his wife.

Finally, *Kant's transcendental psychology*, the location of the source of moral thought and action outside the empirically conditioned self (3), constitutes for Williams a *reductio ad absurdum* of the idea that moral worth can be separated from any natural advantage whatsoever, another point that he developed later, in "Moral luck."<sup>4</sup> Still, as Williams reminds us, the capacity for creative emotional response is, other than the characteristics specifically associated with rich or academic persons, if not equally, at least *broadly distributed*.

Jonathan Bennett (\*1930), who is a British philosopher of language and metaphysics, and also an acclaimed historian of early modern philosophy (with books on Spinoza, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and Kant), takes in his *Philosophy* article



“The conscience of Huckleberry Finn” from 1974 a closer look at how the emotional attitude of *sympathy* might interact with moral conscience. Bennett presents three examples in which sympathy clashes with bad moral conscience, “bad” in the sense of being guided by moral principles of which we today strongly disapprove, such as racist principles: first, Huckleberry Finn, whose sympathy for his slave friend, Jim, wins over his moral conscience; second, Heinrich Himmler, whose moral conscience wins over his sympathy for “the Jews”; and, third, Jonathan Edwards, whose moral conscience, through religious fervor, negates all his sympathy for the sinners.

Bennett does not advocate that sympathy should always win, or, to return to Bernard Williams’ formulation, that it has everything to do with moral motivation. Bennett only claims that sympathy can serve as a good “living” corrective against bad “dead” moral principles. Moral principles, he insists, have their value too; they can guide us at times when our emotions are less than their best—that is, through periods of misanthropy, meanness, self-centeredness, depression, or anger.

Stephen Toulmin (1922–2009), a British philosopher and educator who immigrated to the United States in 1965, was one of the leading proponents of the good reasons approach in ethics and a founding father of argumentation theory. His 1958 book *The Uses of Argument* had a huge impact on the field of communication and computer science.

Toulmin originally presented “The tyranny of principles” at the Hastings Center in 1981. The title of his paper clearly announces the gist of it. Toulmin attacks the unfeeling consistency, narrow dogmatism, and moral absolutism that he sees in the public debates around him, be they about human subject research, abortion, or welfare benefits. He pleads for *discretion*, a reasonable treatment of individual cases, and a large spirit. Principles, rules, rights, and laws are not everything in justice, he warns. There is also judgment, equity, and the case method, i.e., the triangulation from paradigm cases to the more difficult ones.

How did the tyranny of principles arise? Toulmin recounts an interesting historical story, starting with Roman law. Initially, Rome was a small and relatively homogeneous community. Individual judges, the pontiffs, resolved disputes between citizens by equitable arbitration. They had the trust of their fellow citizens. They were not obliged to cite general rules or give any reasons at all. However, this state of affairs did not last. The city grew, Rome acquired an empire, and foreign peoples came under its authority. Discretion, which had rested on the personal characteristics of the pontiffs, began to be displaced by formal rules and argumentative skills, which were easier to teach and to control.

Toulmin places our large industrial societies at the end of this process. Today, the sphere of trust and discretion has shrunk to the nuclear family. An ethics for strangers with formal principles regulates our dealings with all others. Justice, which once consisted of both laws and equity, has been reduced to laws alone. All that people tend to care about is fairness. As Toulmin puts it, “the rule of

law” is confused with the “law of rules,” or, in another nice formulation: people seem to think that equity is “just a literary synonym for equality.”

Toulmin knows that nostalgia for the old world à la Tolstoy cannot save us. After all, the old world had its vices too, such as condescension, social immobility, and abuse of trust. Still, Toulmin’s frail hope is that we can overcome some of our distrust and expand our sympathies beyond the intimate circle, trying to revive institutions of friendship and solidarity between the nuclear family and the state, like friendly societies or the churches.

The American pragmatist Richard Rorty (1931–2007), once married to Amélie Oksenberg Rorty, whose article on fearing death is reprinted in Volume IV, is not as cautious as Bennett and Toulmin. In his rhetorically powerful 1993 Oxford Amnesty Lecture “Human rights, rationality, and sentimentality” he propagates sentimentality *instead* of rationality. His main claim, which is reminiscent of his book *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* (1989), is that we need sentimental education, the manipulation of our feelings via good stories like *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, and not philosophical argument! The pressing question to ask today is: Why should I care for a stranger, say, a Muslim?—and not: Why should I be moral? We should focus on expanding the circle of our sympathy to strangers instead of searching for philosophical arguments against the rational egoist. A kind of counterpart to Rorty’s sweeping postmodern attack on rationality is Friedrich Kambartel’s plea for argumentation and a calm rational life in Volume II.

While Bennett, Toulmin, and Rorty all deal with general questions of how morality and the emotions relate to each other, especially with the questions of partiality and consistency, the following two articles address two particular opposing emotional attitudes, the revengeful and the forgiving, and ask whether or not they are just.

The Frege scholar Gilead Bar-Elli (\*1945) and the moral philosopher David Heyd (\*1945), both from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, pose a puzzling question in their joint 1986 *Theoria* paper “Can revenge be just or otherwise justified?” The answer they arrive at is: No, revenge cannot be just; however, yes, it can be morally justified, even if it is doomed to be a futile, destructive, and frustrating course of action.

Bar-Elli and Heyd start with what they call a “paradox” in our attitude to revenge. On the one hand, in our cool moments of objective theorizing, we tend to condemn acts of revenge; yet, on the other hand, we can find ourselves in sympathy with such acts as an immediate reaction to the deeds of someone with whom we are acquainted, primarily our own selves. Revenge thus seems both unjust and just.

The authors further characterize revenge as an act of hate in response to a wrong that is not only an injury but also an insult. In their analysis, revenge doubly involves intention; the wrong is conceived as having been done intentionally and the reaction of the victim is intentional. This *double intentionality* highlights the personal and emotional character of revenge. The point of revenge is to convey to the offender a “reactive attitude,” in Strawson’s sense, of reciprocal hate.

Since justice is essentially impersonal, it cannot satisfy this personal character of revenge. It might not be enough for the victim that the offender be legally punished; the victim might feel that the offender deserves personal revenge. As Jean Améry puts it in his famous defense of resentments against Nazi-Germany: "My resentments are there in order that the crime become a moral reality for the criminal, in order that he be swept into the truth of his atrocity."<sup>5</sup>

Bar-Elli and Heyd conclude that revenge can be morally justified, although it is not just. Like *supererogation*, the subject of Heyd's 1982 book, which has become basic reading, revenge is beyond the call of duty. Still, reciprocating hate is ultimately futile and the attempt to achieve it is frustrating. It contributes to the increase of ill will and helps to keep the "wounds green, which otherwise would heal," as Bar-Elli and Heyd quote from Francis Bacon. For the act of revenge to be considered successful, the victim of revenge must not only suffer and understand why he is suffering, he must also care about his suffering. And this can never be forced upon him.

In the previously unpublished manuscript "Forgiveness: overcoming justified resentment," Avishai Margalit (\*1939), a moral philosopher and public intellectual, again from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, continues the areas he explored in his *The Ethics of Memory* (2002) and *The Decent Society* (1996). The manuscript is a companion piece to the Bar-Elli and Heyd paper. Like revenge, forgiveness is a personal emotional reaction to a serious insult. In its full-fledged form, forgiveness not only *ignores* the offence, behaving as if it had never happened, it also *overcomes* the justified resentment toward the wrongdoer. In his discussion of various historical cases—Joseph Mengele, Vera Lengsfeld, Eva Kor, and Eugene de Kock—Margalit takes pains to stress that there is no duty to forgive, just as Bar-Elli and Heyd emphasize that there is no duty to take revenge. Forgiveness is noble but it, too, is not just.

Why then should we try to forgive, if we can? Margalit gives two reasons. First, forgiveness can restore an intrinsically valuable relationship with the wrongdoer, such as when a husband forgives the infidelity and betrayal of his wife because of their love. Second, forgiveness can prevent the wrongdoer from getting under the skin of the victim and dictating the victim's life story.

We prefer the generosity of the heart to strict grim justice, says Margalit, in an argument harking back to Williams, which sets up a contrast between generosity, the gift of forgiveness, grace, discretion, tact, and sovereignty on the one hand, and justice, duties, rules, fairness, and autonomy on the other. Sovereignty, as Margalit understands it against much of the Western philosophical tradition, does not mean independence. In the Hebrew bible, God is a sovereign, but He is dependent on His creatures, who constantly betray Him and whom He forgives if they return to Him.

The next and last article in this section could just as well have been included in Volume II on the good life, as it is debatable whether its topic is more related to the self and its flourishing or to what the self morally owes to others. It could even have been included in the aesthetics section of this volume. The interesting

topic in question is sentimentality, and the eye-opening article on it is by Michael Tanner.

Michael Tanner (\*1935), Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, taught philosophy and literature, though music has always been of at least equal importance to him; he has been the opera critic for *The Spectator* since 1996 and his book *Wagner* was published in 1996.

His lecture "Sentimentality," which abounds with musical and literary examples, was given at a meeting of the *Aristotelian Society* in London in 1977. Tanner opens his lecture with a famous quotation from Oscar Wilde according to whom a sentimentalist is "simply one who desires to have the luxury of an emotion without paying for it." Tanner builds on this insight while dealing with four issues: first and mainly, the four conditions that are typical of sentimental people or their emotions; second, the harmful or corrupting quality of sentimentality; third, the non-contingent link between sentimentality and cynicism, or even cruelty; and, fourth, the historical character of sentimentality.

Tanner characterizes sentimental people as:

- 1 responding with extreme readiness to stimuli;
- 2 appearing to be pained, but actually enjoying their pangs;
- 3 responding with equal violence to disparate stimuli at an amazing pace;
- 4 avoiding following up their responses with appropriate action.

On this basis, Tanner goes on to identify the origin of the "disease" of sentimentality in the dislocation of sentimental emotions from their objects (if they have them)—that is, in their tendency to *auto-generate*. In connection with this, he perceives an element of *dishonesty*, probably of self-deceit, in sentimentality as well as a certain *passivity* of the mind in relation to the emotions. Tanner therefore calls for an education and discipline of the emotions, through music, among other fields.<sup>6</sup> His ideal is a person who has no fear of his emotions, however voluminous and powerful they might be, because of his confidence in their vitality and their vitalizing effect on others.

By way of an example of the third point, the link between cynicism, cruelty, and sentimentality, Tanner discusses Rudolf Hoess, the commandant of Auschwitz concentration camp, who wept in response to a performance of Verdi's *Requiem* that was given by Jews who were to be incinerated the next day.

Tanner ends his lecture with the historical diagnosis that most of our basic attitudes and emotions today are sentimental as they are based on a more or less *Christian outlook* even though we no longer live in a Christian society and most of us are not Christians. He notes that many an atheist, including himself, thinks that Bach's *Mass in B minor* is one of the greatest works of art, and he questions whether this is what they should feel. Still, the sentimental abandonment to unearned emotions seems to Tanner the lesser evil compared with the frightful state, as depicted in Eliot's *Wasteland*, of being imprisoned in ourselves, becalmed in a windless selfishness, with the only emotion left being fear of emotion itself.



In his *Aesthetics of Music*, a chapter of which features in the aesthetics section of this volume, Roger Scruton builds on and extends Tanner's analysis, putting more emphasis on the moral problem of sentimentality. Scruton portrays the sentimentalist as an *immoralist*. For the sentimentalist, according to Scruton, wishes above all that others credit him with a warm heart and generous feelings, but he does not wish to pay the price that those things demand. Not only does sentimentality place someone at a distance from reality, it also involves an over-evaluation of the self at the cost of others. The other becomes a means to feed the sentimentalist's own emotional fires, rather than the objective. A sentimental friend is thus not a real friend; he is a danger to others:

His instinct is to facilitate tragedy, in order to bathe in easy sympathy; to stimulate love, in order to pretend to love in return, while always reserving his heart and mind, and calculating his own advantage. He enters human relations by seduction, and leaves them by betrayal.<sup>7</sup>

### Aesthetics and the emotions

... Poetically man dwells ...

(Friedrich Hölderlin)

It is a commonplace hardly in need of scientific confirmation that art and nature can speak to us emotionally.<sup>8</sup> Still, the relation between aesthetics and the emotions is in some respects puzzling. Jerrold Levinson (\*1948) from the University of Maryland, College Park, helpfully distinguishes four philosophical puzzles in his 2006 (originally published 1997) survey "Emotion in response to art."<sup>9</sup> As Levinson's survey provides a map of the whole terrain, his article comes first. Levinson discerns the following four puzzles:

- 1 How can we have emotions for *fictional* persons or situations, given that we do not believe in their existence?
- 2 How do *abstract* works of art, especially musical ones, generate emotions in audiences, and toward what do audiences then have these emotions?
- 3 How can we make sense of the interest that appreciators have in experiencing art that conveys *negative* emotions?
- 4 Is there a tension or conflict between responding emotionally to art and what *aesthetic* appreciation of art demands?

As Levinson puts the emphasis on (1), no further article on the so-called *paradox of fiction* is included in this volume. Question (2) on abstract art lies at the center of any discussion of aesthetics and the emotions because emotions are paradigm objects of expression. The question of expression is addressed by Roger Scruton, Richard Wollheim, Jenefer Robinson, Angelika Krebs, and Tom Cochrane. Question (3) on negative emotions is dealt with by Jonathan Lear and Michael

Haneke who also touches on question (4) about the aesthetic attitude. Another rationale for selection has been that most forms of art as well as nature should be represented. Levinson, Cavell, and Lear focus on literature, Haneke on film, Scruton on music, Robinson on architecture, Krebs and Cochrane on nature, and Wollheim on painting.

The *paradox of fiction* (1), as presented by Levinson, arises because not all of the following three plausible propositions can be true at the same time:

- We often have emotions for fictional characters and situations known to be purely fictional.
- Emotions for objects logically presuppose beliefs in the existence and features of those objects.
- We do not have beliefs in the existence of objects known to be fictional.

Levinson runs through seven attempts to (dis)solve this (seeming) paradox:

- the *non-intentionalist* solution: our affective responses to art are not "emotional" in the narrow sense, but only reflex reactions like shock or objectless moods like cheerfulness;
- the *suspension-of-disbelief* solution: while caught in fiction, we actually believe in the existence of fictional characters or situations;
- the *surrogate-object* solution: the real objects of our emotions are (sorts of) people we know from life;
- the *anti-judgmentalist* solution: only something weaker than existential beliefs, unasserted thoughts for example, is involved;
- the *surrogate-belief* solution: the existential beliefs are not about what is literally, but only about what is fictionally the case;
- the *irrationalist* solution: we should accept that our emotional reaction to fiction is unwarranted or inconsistent;
- the *make-belief* solution: our emotions in response to fiction are only imaginary or make-belief emotions.

Levinson himself favors the last solution, which goes back to Kendall L. Walton's influential article about a horror film that threatens to cover everything and everybody, including the audience, in green slime.<sup>10</sup> This solution sees a stark contrast between the standard emotions we encounter in ordinary life and the non-standard emotions we have in reading fiction, as the latter seem to involve neither the existential beliefs nor the motivations to act that are typical of their ordinary-life counterparts. Levinson explains that it is because make-belief emotions internally feel so similar to real emotions (and, as he takes pains to stress, these inner feelings are indeed real, however they are caused) that we easily confuse them with real emotions. Scruton, in contrast, insists, as we shall see shortly, that our emotions in response to art are real emotions.



*Abstract art* (2) does not give us an image of the human world, as fiction does. Still, abstract art seems to touch us emotionally even more. How does this occur? One mechanism Levinson discerns is *sensory* or cognitively unmediated; an example would be the discomfort occasioned by dissonant intervals. The other route, which he regards as aesthetically primary, is *perceptual-imaginative* or cognitively mediated. To illustrate how this route works, Levinson inserts his musical persona theory, for which he is in fact best known. As he develops in his book *Music, Art, and Metaphysics* from 1990, music is heard as if it was the expression of emotion by an unspecified individual, the music's *persona*. Our disposition to hear music in that way and to respond to its persona with parallel emotions has something, yet not everything, to do with the *resemblance* between the shape of the music and the behaviors through which emotions are commonly expressed in life.<sup>11</sup>

The so-called *paradox of tragedy* is a classical illustration of question (3): Why do we not avoid art that is negatively emotional, expressing or representing grief, shame, anger, or despair, but on the contrary hold this kind of art in the highest esteem? Again, Levinson lists the major explanations, himself taking cues from the first three:

- the *compensatory* explanation: the unpleasant emotions aroused by art are compensated for by other rewards like catharsis, aesthetic pleasure, and various kinds of knowledge;
- the *conversionary* explanation: the initially negative emotions are not only compensated for, but even transformed into (at least partly) agreeable ones;
- the *organicist* explanation: the negative emotions evoked by art play an essential part in the *total* experience of art, which we value so greatly;
- the *revisionary* explanation: negative emotions do not really feel intrinsically unpleasant; what is negative about them is only their evaluation of their objects;
- the *deflationary* explanation: the spectators do not really feel negative emotions, but only, if at all, make-belief ones or positive appreciation of the work's beauty.

Regarding the last question of the *aesthetic appreciation of art* (4), Levinson separates the aesthetic delight we take in the form of an artwork from the parallel emotions with which we respond to its content. The latter especially can seem to contradict the aesthetic attitude that, following Kant and Schopenhauer, is one of *disinterestedness*, detachment, or disengagement from the practical. Charitably construed, however, Levinson can find no such contradiction. All that is needed for aesthetic attention, he argues, is that one is primarily directed to the work of art and what humanly significant material it presents, and not to one's personal situation, misusing the artwork as a springboard for wallowing in one's private concerns.

The English philosopher Roger Scruton (\*1944) explores question (2) about abstract art in the core chapter of what is perhaps his greatest philosophical

work, *The Aesthetics of Music* from 1997, one of the more than 30 philosophical books he has written, mainly on aesthetics, ethics, and political philosophy. Yet, Scruton is not only a philosopher, but also a writer and a composer. His passion for beauty is readily discernible by the reader of his philosophical writings too. His richly evocative and illuminating style differs considerably from Levinson's, which is more focused on putting things in order.

In the chapter "Content," Scruton shows not only how abstract music can express a state of mind, paradigmatically an emotion, but also how it is that people can understand the expressive character of music and yet sincerely deny that *that* is what they understand.

The nineteenth-century music critic Eduard Hanslick is a case in point. Hanslick notoriously argues that since emotions have objects, the expression of emotions in music would require precisely what music cannot offer—the representation of objects. For the *formalist* Hanslick, the essence of music lies in forms moved by sounding, "tönend-bewegte Formen."

Scruton meets Hanslick's objection by pointing out that a work of art can convey an emotion by portraying only its subject and not its object, as when a painting conveys fear by portraying a figure who with intense misgiving stares from the canvas towards a point outside it. In fact, Levinson's persona theory, which has us hear music as if it were the voice of an imaginary subject, can be understood this way.

Scruton himself, however, does not follow this line exactly. He sets his *double intentionality* approach against Levinson's persona theory: we do not hear *x* (the music) *as if* it were *y* (the voice of a persona), but rather we hear *y in x*. This *hearing in* exhibits double intentionality, as you must hear *x*, and focus on *x*, at the same time as hearing *y* in it, and focusing on *y*. For example, you may hear a curlew's song as if it were the cry of a departed spirit, without hearing it as the curlew's song. But if you hear the cry of a departed spirit *in* the curlew's song, you must also focus on the song and hear it as it is, knowing it *not* to be the cry of a departed spirit.

Scruton's double intentionality approach builds on material he introduces in the first three chapters of his book. There he distinguishes between three levels in music and explains how metaphors work. These three *levels in music* are:

- the physical level of *vibrations in the air*;
- the phenomenal level of heard *sounds*, "audibilia," which the deaf person cannot hear;
- the aesthetic, musical level of *tones* heard in the sounds.

To hear tones in music moving up and down, attracting and repelling each other, striving forward and lingering, crying out and comforting, is to hear sounds through the *metaphor of human life*: of human movement in space, of human action and feeling. In using metaphor, we deliberately apply a concept to something that is known not to exemplify it, such as when we call Monday a blue



day. By fusing dissimilar things we change the thing's aspect, so that we respond to it in a different way. Hearing music is metaphorical hearing, hearing with double intentionality, hearing *both* sounds and tones by hearing tones *in* sounds.

One upshot of all this is that Hanslick's hearing of "tönend-bewegte Formen" is also metaphorical in character, as nothing literally moves in music; there are no mobile individuals with orientation, moving from one place to another, but only sounds after sounds. Therefore, Scruton claims that Hanslick is no formalist after all and that once the metaphorical character of all musical experience is acknowledged, we are perfectly free to apply other metaphors to it than the one of movement, especially the metaphor of human emotion.

Scruton makes a second major point in his chapter that concerns our *response* to the emotions expressed in music. He claims that this response is a sympathetic one. When we hear music, we *move with* it emotionally.<sup>12</sup> For Scruton, sympathetic emotions are as easily aroused by imaginary as by real situations; indeed, they are more fully released in us by artistic fiction than by fact. His explanation for this is that in real situations our interests are at stake, while fiction is free from the usual costs of sympathy. Scruton's answer to question (1) thus differs from Levinson's answer. According to Scruton's account, the sympathetic emotions aroused by art are not only feelings; they include also an active assessment of the world, as a place in which our concerns are at stake, as well as actions, like the tapping of feet or dancing with the music; this is why through the *free play of sympathy* we can educate or corrupt our emotions.<sup>13</sup>

Scruton thus connects the expressive character of art with its role in the education or *realization* of our emotions, in what Hegel called their "Entäusserung." We encounter works of art, writes Scruton, as *perfected icons* of our felt potential and appropriate them in order to bring form, lucidity, and self-knowledge to our inner life. One example he gives for this is Schubert's string quartet in G Major D887. In hearing the transition from the fearful opening statement to the second dance-like but strangely solitary melody, we are being led to enact the lightness and wonder of life just at the point when we should recall it, the point at which fear and foreboding threaten to become morbid.

Still, many people would deny that such a description can capture what music is all about. And they are correct in a way, Scruton admits: There is an *ineffability* in music; in other words, its content seems *intransitive*, rather than transitive. The understanding of music consists in sympathetically moving with it, which is an experience. A merely discursive description of the music's content in terms of beliefs cannot fully capture it. Via empathy as prompted by sympathy, we attain a kind of immediate knowledge, a so-called *knowledge by acquaintance* of what something is like from the first person perspective.

As we have seen, Scruton's chapter does not only address question (2)—how abstract art can convey emotion—but touches also on question (1) on the paradox of fiction. Yet it also sheds some light on Levinson's two other questions. Sympathy as other-regarding emotion goes well with disinterested aesthetic attention (question (4)). And, as the Schubert example suggests, in feeling

sympathy with negative emotions (question (3)), Scruton sees us as rehearsing our capacity for compassion in general and as deepening our understanding of particular negative emotions.

Richard Wollheim (1923–2003), Professor of Philosophy first at University College, London, later at UC Berkeley, is acclaimed for his work on the visual arts and on the emotions. His psychoanalytical approach (following Sigmund Freud and Melanie Klein) is evident in the article "Correspondence, projective properties, and expression in the arts" from 1993. This article enlarges the view on expression to be found in his 1987 book *Painting as an Art*. Wollheim contrasts his own approach via *projection* with what he calls the *predication view* that was advocated by Nelson Goodman; but Levinson and Scruton also defend such a view. Wollheim's original and dense article exclusively addresses question (2).

Wollheim tries to understand the phenomenon of artistic expression by starting from a more familiar phenomenon, namely the *correspondence* we discern (independent of our personal condition) between landscapes and moods—for example, between a suburban autumn scene and melancholy, or between a Bavarian countryside with rolling hills and happiness. He distinguishes this phenomenon of correspondence from other cases in which we apply psychological predicates to nature: for instance, when we call a slope gentle because it is easy to navigate, or a province peaceful because of the character of the people who inhabit it.

The *predication view* denies that landscapes themselves can be happy or melancholy; it explains the phenomenon of correspondence "away," as Wollheim puts it, reducing it to our metaphorical descriptions of it as happy or melancholy. Against this, Wollheim holds that landscapes can really be happy or melancholy, of course not in an animistic sense, but in another sense, the projective one.

*Projection* refers to an internal act we carry out under instinctual guidance, when there is either a mental condition of ours that we value (like love or curiosity) and that we find threatened, or one that we dread (like cruelty or melancholy) and by which we find ourselves threatened. Anxiety alerts us to this situation, and projection alters it, bringing us some relief from this anxiety. At the beginning of life, projection occurs in a totally haphazard fashion. Only later does it become more orderly and the parts of the environment upon which features are projected are selected because of their affinity to these feelings. In consequence those parts of the environment are experienced as of a piece with these feelings.

*Projective properties* are properties that we identify through experiences we have; in this regard they are like secondary properties, such as colors that would not exist if nobody was there to see them. But projective properties are more complex than such secondary properties, first, in being not only perceptual, but also *affective* with the affection directed not merely toward what is in front of us but also to some older and more dominant object. Second, the experience intimates or reveals a *history*, sometimes its own, more often only the kind of projective history of how it could have come about.



*Simple* projection propels an unwelcome psychological property onto another figure with psychology, thereby changing primarily the beliefs about this figure, whereas *complex* projection propels an unwelcome psychological property onto an environment without psychology, thereby changing primarily our attitude and not our beliefs. Furthermore, the property itself is changed; the melancholy character of the landscape is experienced not as a state of mind that is inherent in the landscape irrespective of ourselves, but as continuous with our own melancholy, as *of a piece with it*.

In the last third of his article, Wollheim applies the projective approach to the visual arts. A painting expresses an internal condition by corresponding to, or being of a piece with, it. Furthermore, the perceptible property in virtue of which it does so is a property it has intentionally: the property is due to the *intentions of the artist*. The artist intended the work to have this property so that it can express some internal condition that he had in mind.<sup>14</sup>

Jenefer Robinson (\*1945) from the University of Cincinnati is another expert on aesthetics and the emotions. Her major book, *Deeper than Reason* from 2005, deals with the role of emotion in literature, music, and art. The article selected here, "On being moved by architecture," is a revised version of her 2010 presidential address for the *American Society for Aesthetics*.

Architecture is similar to music and abstract painting in being nonrepresentational, but it is unlike them in being an applied or functional art. It therefore should not come as a surprise that Robinson's answer to question (2) concerning expression in abstract art differs considerably from the answers outlined so far.

Robinson starts her informative and readable article with Juhani Pallasmaa's attack on *ocularcentrism* or the hegemonic eye in much recent architecture and architectural theory. Building on Pallasmaa, Robinson's two main claims are, first, that understanding and appreciating architecture requires a multisensory and proprioceptive *moving through* the work of architecture and, second, that these movements induce *actual* feelings or emotions (no paradox of fiction here!) that help us to understand the work.

For Robinson, the quality of architecture depends on how it invites or affords us to move and feel. James J. Gibson's notion of *affordances* serves as Robinson's key concept. As she illustrates with photographs, Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye, for example, affords us the opportunity to move in a free, graceful, and measured way, instilling feelings of confidence in humanity and humanistic ideals. She regards appreciating the affordances of a building as the primary part of aesthetic appreciation and thus as more important than *moving with* or sympathizing with the building itself, as Roger Scruton would have it.<sup>15</sup>

Robinson's emphasis on affordances is no doubt due to architecture being a functional art; buildings are first of all to be lived in rather than to be contemplated. Still, Robinson sees her approach as compatible with Kant's disinterested contemplation (question (4)), insofar as appreciating affordances is not just a matter of *satisfying* interests.

Angelika Krebs (\*1961), who did her Ph.D. under Friedrich Kambartel and Bernard Williams, has been Professor of Philosophy at the University of Basel since 2001. Her main areas of research are aesthetics, philosophy of emotions, especially romantic love, social and political philosophy, and practical ethics (see for example her 1999 United Nations study, *Ethics of Nature*).

Her 2017 article "'As if the earth has long stopped speaking to us': Resonance with nature and its loss" addresses question (2) about expression, not in art though, but in nature, especially in landscapes. Krebs argues that environmental aesthetics must be put center stage in the debate on nature conservation. She understands the aesthetic contemplation of nature as an affective experience of sympathetically moving with or resonating with natural atmospheres. The great and irreplaceable value of beautiful landscapes is that they make us *feel at home* in the world.

Art and literature, such as the poetic novels of the Sudeten-German Peter Kurzeck, from whom her title quotation stems, help us to better appreciate natural beauty and to better dwell on earth. "Poetically man dwells," as Friedrich Hölderlin says.<sup>16</sup>

Whereas Krebs focuses on natural beauty, Tom Cochrane (\*1978), from the philosophy department at Sheffield University, turns to natural sublimity in his 2012 article, "The emotional experience of the sublime." Cochrane's major field of research is the connection between art and mind. He is particularly interested in the emotional power of music, which is also the subject of a multidisciplinary book he co-edited with Bernadino Fantini and Klaus R. Scherer in 2013. Cochrane, who holds an MA in music composition, has developed a "mood organ," a program for generating music automatically using physiological and behavioral signals of emotion.

The article reprinted here provides an excellent systematic and historical survey on sublimity. Cochrane helpfully distinguishes between self-centered and object-centered explanations of the attractions that sublime phenomena such as mountains, storms, deserts, volcanoes, and the starry sky above hold for us. More particularly, he articulates five models:

- 1 the *relief* model: our knowledge that we are safe from the threat of the sublime object permits us not just to tolerate it, but to take pleasure in the feeling that we have not in fact been overwhelmed;
- 2 the *heroic* model: the attraction of the sublime is located in the overcoming of our aversions and the enhanced recognition of our powers;
- 3 the *humble* model: the insignificance we feel in comparison to the sublime object is real, but this is not necessarily a bad thing, as our worries may be equally diminished;
- 4 the *admiration* model: we feel joy in the contemplation of the object's superiority;
- 5 the *identification* model: we imaginatively identify with the properties of the sublime object and take on some of its power and magnitude.



Cochrane himself adopts the last model, stressing however the dual or conflicting nature of the experience. In moving with the sublime, we simultaneously realize how vulnerable and insignificant we are. There is a tension within the experience between the sense of *self-negation* and the celebration of the object. Nevertheless, not only beautiful but also sublime nature can help us feel connected to the wider world rather than alienated from it, Cochrane claims.

While Cochrane's text only touches on question (3) concerning negative emotions, Jonathan Lear's article "Catharsis" tackles this head on. Jonathan Lear (\*1948) is a Professor of Philosophy at the University of Chicago and a psychoanalyst. He works primarily on philosophical conceptions of the human psyche, especially in Aristotle and Sigmund Freud. His article, which is originally from 1988 and is also published in his 1998 *Open Minded* collection, provides an ingenious interpretation of what Aristotle might mean when he characterizes *tragedy* as the mimesis of an action that, through pity and fear, brings about the catharsis of such emotions.

Lear begins by presenting and critically examining three traditional *understandings of catharsis*:

- eurgation
- purification
- education

Lear rejects all three understandings. He then isolates a series of seven constraints that any adequate account of catharsis must satisfy, and finally offers his own account.

The first two of his seven constraints pinpoint what is in fact his major argument against the three traditional understandings. First, a *virtuous person* also has reasons to experience the performance of a tragedy; he too will experience a catharsis of pity and fear. Thus, second, catharsis cannot be a process that is essentially corrective: i.e., it cannot be a medical purgation of something pathological or noxious, or a religious purification of some pollution or an ethical education of the emotions.

Lear's next two constraints are aesthetic and underline the importance of some kind of distance on part of the audience: First, what one feels at the performance of a tragedy is not what one would or should feel in its real-life counterpart. Second, an appropriate audience does not lose sight of the fact that it is enjoying the performance of a tragedy.

The last three constraints concern the emotional character of catharsis. He holds that, first, the mere expression or release of emotions is not in itself pleasurable, but that, second, catharsis provides a pleasurable relief, and that, third, the events in a tragedy that properly provoke the pity and fear from which a tragic catharsis occurs must be such that the audience believes that they could happen to them.

Lear develops his own account on the basis of these seven constraints. His key idea is that a tragedy brings closer to home, something that we tend to ignore

in ordinary life, namely the possibility of a breakdown of our primordial bonds. This possibility is both too remote to justify fear in ordinary life and too vital to completely ignore. The theatre provides an arena, an "appropriately inappropriate" environment in which we can imaginatively experience it, living life to the full, but not risking anything.

How then does Lear solve the *paradox of tragedy* (3)? He does not seem to solve it in the compensatory manner as traditional understandings of catharsis may do. Rather, Lear seems to solve it in the *conversionary* manner, bringing out how in the safe environment of the theatre we can experience the (painful) emotions of pity and fear in a relieved way.

Stanley Cavell (\*1926) also deals with tragedy in "The avoidance of love: a reading of *King Lear*." Cavell, an Emeritus Professor of Aesthetics and the General Theory of Value at Harvard University, is best known for his book *The Claim of Reason: Wittgenstein, Skepticism, Morality, and Tragedy* from 1979. Although analytically trained, especially by John Austin, in ordinary language philosophy, Cavell often interacts with continental philosophy, such as Heidegger and Nietzsche. He is also renowned for including film such as Hollywood comedies of remarriage, and literary study, above all Shakespeare, in philosophical inquiry.

The short passage selected here is taken from his earliest and most influential interpretation of a Shakespeare play. This article, over 80 pages long, treats many theoretical issues including the paradoxes of fiction and of tragedy, and the nature of catharsis. However, the passage we have selected for this volume is largely interpretative, exemplifying Cavell's special mode of attention to the words of a literary work, focused on the *voice* that speaks them, and through that to the states of mind in which only those words said in that order will do.

The passage is a close reading of the abdication scene in Shakespeare's *King Lear*. In this famous scene, the elderly King Lear, having decided to relinquish his power and divide his kingdom among his three daughters, Cordelia, Regan, and Goneril, subjects them to a test of their love. His plan is to give the best piece of his kingdom to the child who professes to love him most, expecting his cherished youngest daughter Cordelia to easily win the challenge. Yet, in contrast to her two older corrupt and deceitful sisters, Cordelia refuses to partake in Lear's game and to flatter him. Enraged, he disowns her, from which point the tragedy unfolds.

Traditional interpretations have struggled to make sense both of Lear's gross injustice (is he senile, is he puerile?) and of Cordelia's refusal (is she a defiant rebel, is she a moral saint?). Cavell offers an intriguing understanding of what really goes on in this scene, enlarging our understanding of the emotions of love and shame. To Cavell, Lear and Cordelia appear as ordinary human beings in the everyday context of family life. A parent is bribing love out of his children; two of them accept the bribe, the third shrinks from the attempt, realizing that it involves a debasement of love. Cavell's Lear is fully aware that he is attempting to bribe and he wants exactly what a bribe can buy: false love and a public

expression of love to make him look like a man who is deeply loved. Cordelia, who offers the real thing, cannot, as Cavell puts it, publicly pretend to love where she really does love. Lear, who was perfectly happy with his little plan before, now feels ashamed both of his inability to truly love and of his favorite daughter's failure to compete publicly. It is shame and the avoidance of love that drives the whole tragedy, according to Cavell.

*Shame* is, as he explains it, the emotion whose effect is most precipitate and out of proportion to its cause. It is most isolating, incomprehensible, and incommunicable, and also most primitive. Cavell's study of the workings of shame could just as well have been included in Volume IV on particular emotions. It is included here because Cavell looks at this emotion as it is exemplified in a great work of art.

The next and last text reprinted here touches on questions (3) of negative emotions and (4) of the aesthetic attitude. It is written by an artist, the Austrian film-maker Michael Haneke (\*1942). "Violence and the media" is a lecture he delivered when his film *Benny's Video* was screened at the Marstall Theatre in Munich in 1995. This was two years before *Funny Games* was released, making him internationally known but not loved, and almost 20 years before *Amour* appeared, which finally earned him international affection. Haneke studied philosophy in Vienna before he turned to television and film.

In his lecture, Haneke critically explores film's capacity to simulate reality virtually *in toto* due to the simultaneously eye- and ear-occupying intensity of the medium, the monumental size of its images, and the speed at which its images demand to be viewed. Film's capacity to *overwhelm* predestines it for a narcotized—that is, anti-reflexive—reception, which is of course particularly troubling in the case of violence.

While the still image generally shows an action's result and appeals to the viewer's solidarity with the victim, film shows the action itself and often puts the viewer in the position of the perpetrator. Haneke considers this *guiltless complicity* to explain the all-overpowering presence of violence in film. The surrogate action banishes the terror of reality; a mythical narrative mode and an aestheticized mode of representation allow a safe release of our fears and desires. In particular, he mentions three *dramaturgical tricks* that enable reality to be exorcized:

- the *disengagement* of the violence-producing situation from the viewer's own immediate life experiences that would elicit identification;
- the *intensification* of the viewer's life conditions and their jeopardization, which allows him or her to approve of the act of violence;
- the *embedding* of the action in an atmosphere of wit and satire.

Historically speaking, Haneke believes that the emergence of television and the compulsion of film and television to trump one another has led to an ever increasing formal intensity and an even further blurring of the boundary between

reality and image, with the final result that an absolute equivalence of all the contents stripped of their reality ensures the *universal fictionality* of everything shown.

At the end of his alarming lecture, Haneke asks whether film—under such conditions—merits the name of art at all. His answer is that as every art should aim at human dialogue, film as art must give the viewer the chance to recognize this loss of reality and his own implication in it, thus emancipating him from being a victim of the medium and becoming its potential partner.<sup>17</sup>

### Notes

- 1 For some discussion on Strawson's article see Wallace 1994, McKenna and Russell 2008 as well as Helm and Deigh, both in the Bagnoli collection on morality and the emotions (Bagnoli 2011). Taylor 1985 on the concept of a person (in Volume I) shares Strawson's anti-reductionist spirit.
- 2 For surveys on Aristotle and Kant on the emotions see, for example, Sherman 1994 and 1990 as well as Hursthouse 1997.
- 3 See also Frankfurt 1999 (in Volume II) on autonomy, necessity, and love. For some discussion on Williams' ethical philosophy cf. Altham and Harrison 1995.
- 4 For more on moral luck, remorse, and agent-regret, cf. Baron 1988 (Volume IV).
- 5 Améry 1980, 70, cf. also Heyd 1995 and 2014.
- 6 For more on the education of the emotions through the arts, cf. Hepburn 1984.
- 7 Scruton 1997, 487, see also Scruton 2014 on kitsch.
- 8 The new discipline of empirical aesthetics nevertheless confirms this commonplace, see Menninghaus *et al.* 2015.
- 9 Levinson's article first appeared in *Emotions and the Arts*, edited by Mette Hjort and Sue Laver in 1997. The 2006 version reprinted here hardly differs from the original.
- 10 Walton 1993, see also Walton 1997.
- 11 For more on resemblance, see Peter Kivy's contour theory in Kivy 1980, chapter 8.
- 12 Cf. Goldie 1999 (Volume II) and Krebs in this volume for more on the nature of sympathy, as opposed to mere understanding, empathy, emotional sharing, infection, and identification.
- 13 For more on this solution of the paradox of fiction, see Scruton 2010 and Wettstein 2015 who extends Scruton's anti-judgmentalist approach. Wettstein reminds us that standard emotions in ordinary life also do not necessarily require existential beliefs. For example, hope and fear, Gordon's epistemic emotions (see Gordon in Volume I), are "asserted" evaluations of "unasserted thoughts." We "really" evaluate as good or bad something that is "only imagined" or entertained as possible. We do not only *imagine* ourselves to evaluate it. Therefore, our emotions are real, even if the consequences for action are and indeed must be different from the consequences we draw when we take the events and the person to be real. See also Frijda 1988 on the law of apparent reality (Volume I) and Frijda 1989.
- 14 See the last chapter of Podro 1998 for a continuation of Wollheim's approach to painting.
- 15 It is not only Scruton's aesthetics of music that is "sympathetic," but also his aesthetics of architecture, cf. Scruton 1979.
- 16 See Heidegger's exploration of the Hölderlin verse in Heidegger 1971.
- 17 Cf. Cox and Levine 2012, for an analysis of *Funny Games* along these lines. For more by Haneke on film and art, see the two books of interviews: Haneke and Assheuer 2008, and Haneke *et al.* 2012.



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