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Empathy theories of Theodor Lipps, Vernon Lee and Hugo Munsterberg

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EMPATHY THEORIES OF THEODOR LIPPS, VERNON LEE AND HUGO MUNSTERBERG

by

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INTRODUCTION

One of the fundamental questions that philosophies of Aesthetics have attempted to resolve is whether a concept of objective beauty can be validated or justified. There have been aestheticians who have asserted that not only is such a concept valid but the subjective elements in the aesthetic experience only serve to hide the actual beauty.[1] On the other hand others have maintained that the experience of beauty is fundamentally subjective. For example, an essential feature of the philosophy of the Romantic movement was that beauty is "the expression of life and personality in the objects of art and nature."[2]

The concept of empathy, originally Einfühlung arose in attempting to clarify the subjective nature of the aesthetic experience. The term Einfühlung however has been used with rather different connotations by different aestheticians. As a result the term does little more to pinpoint a particular aesthetic theory than to indicate the subjective emphasis of the theory. Einfühlung

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[1] "We must disentangle the pattern of perceptions which the work of art has interwoven.
. . . . . .
the subjective stimulants of sympathy be outside the realm of objective beauty which is valid for all men at all times." (Johann Freidrich Herbart, "Practical Philosophy" in Philosophies of Beauty by Carritt [New York: Oxford University Press, 1931], p. 151.)

[2] Earl of Listowel, Critical History of Modern Aesthetics (London: George Allen and Unwen Ltd., 1933), p. 51.

literally means "feeling into" an object and although at times with Lipps it seems to mean "feeling in" an object, he does share the "feeling into" notion that is common to the other two theories that shall be discussed. The three writers with which we shall be concerned, Theodor Lipps,[1] Vernon Lee (pseudonym for Violet Paget)[2] and Hugo Munsterberg,[3] can be classed together then, because of their notion that a person attributes to an aesthetic object qualities whose "ultimate" source is in the person himself. These three have developed the notion most elaborately. Before dealing with them separately, and in detail, it will be well to indicate some of the considerations that lead to a theory of aesthetic empathy, those problems in the aesthetic experience for which empathy comes to give a certain type of answer.

The visual aesthetic experience with which the empathy theories discussed here are mostly concerned can be studied within two frameworks. These frameworks are not absolute categories but directions through which the aesthetic experience as discussed by the empathists could be analyzed. On the one hand, the aesthetic

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[1] Ästhetik, Vols. I, II (Hamburg: Verlag Von Leopold Voss, 1903).

[2] The Beautiful (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1913); and in collaboration with C. Ansrutier-Thomson, Beauty and Ugliness and Other Studies in Psychological Aesthetics (London: John Lane Co., 1912).

[3] The Principles of Art Education (New York: Prang Educational Co., 1905); and "The Problem of Beauty," Philosophical Review, XVIII (1909), pp. 121-146.

experience can be assumed to involve perceptive and cognitive processes in which the observer gains information about the aesthetic object. As such the aesthetic experience can be compared with simple cognitive processes involved in perceiving, say, that an object is red, or blue, square, or rectangular. Secondly, let us assume the aesthetic experience is one that has a certain pleasure content. The observer, if he is not indifferent to the aesthetic experience, will be affected either positively or negatively and he will experience either satisfaction or dissatisfaction. (Satisfaction can be interpreted quite broadly and each of the empathy theories to be discussed explain it differently.) In the cognitive processes, in general, it seems that although the observer plays a major role, this role is usually unimportant and perhaps irrelevant to him. He may know that he is involved but he does not actually feel himself involved. On the other hand when dealing with experiences that contain a dimension of pleasure, the observer generally feels himself central in the experience and the object which is the source of pleasure or displeasure is given a secondary role. Now the aesthetic experience does not function either as a pleasure experience or as a cognitive experience. It stands in a unique relationship to the pleasure experience and the cognitive experience and requires special treatment when considered functioning within either of these frameworks.

First let us consider the aesthetic experience in terms of the pleasure dimension.

In the aesthetic case (and we are directing ourselves particularly to the visual aesthetic case) the aesthetic object

maintains a central role. If a person is stung by a bee or if he smells the odor of a skunk he is concerned mainly with his sensations and not with its source. One might even consider whether the sting or the odor produced artificially would change the essential content of the experience. But central to the development of the empathy theories that shall be discussed later is the view that in the case of the aesthetic experience the content of the experience for the observer cannot be separated from its source, the aesthetic object. As we shall see the observer does not dwell on the sensations or feelings as his body or person experiences them, but constantly relates them to their cause in the aesthetic object. One of the observations that might have brought the empathists to this view is that the observer usually expresses the extent of his pleasure as a judgment of beauty regarding the aesthetic object. The person stung by the bee or smelling the foul odor of the skunk reacts by saying "it hurts" or "it smells" in reference to himself. The reaction to a positive or negative aesthetic experience, however, is in the form "the painting is beautiful" or "that man is ugly."

Central to the theories of aesthetic empathy are explanations as to how the pleasure in the observer is related to the object. But even among the empathists there are variations as to exactly what is involved in relating these sensations or feelings of pleasure to the object. There are those like Munsterberg and Lipps who feel that empathy (i.e. attribution of feelings) is a prerequisite of aesthetic pleasure, the aesthetic experience cannot be consummated without the

abstraction of feelings from the observer and their projection onto the aesthetic object. Vernon Lee is one empathist who does not seem to agree that attribution is the basic condition for pleasure but nevertheless needs attribution for other reasons. For Vernon Lee the observer feels (or does not feel) pleasure in reacting to the aesthetic object as he would feel in a simpler way in reacting to any sensation, except that in the aesthetic situation the pleasure is not localizable in the body of the observer. The ordinary pleasure feeling may be located in a certain part of our body, whereas the aesthetic feelings are diffuse in relation to our body. So there results a tendency to locate the feelings in the external object which brought about the feelings.[1] This means of course that the object then seems to express these feelings.

> Whenever during the contemplation of an object our bodily feelings and moods corresponding with the expressive forms of the object happen not to be perceptibly localized in our own body, then they will simply fill the object . . . then there arises that condition which subsequent reflection makes us designate as projection of ourselves into the object.[2]

Lee then does have a theory of attribution so that the object remains involved in the aesthetic experience but it is a much weaker involvement than Lipps' and Munsterberg's involvement.

For Munsterberg the value of the aesthetic experience lies in experiencing the object as it is in itself, isolated from all

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[1]Lee, Beauty and Ugliness, pp. 30, 53.

[2]Karl Groos, "Das Aesthetische Miterleben," Zeitschrift fur Aesthetik, IV Band, Heft 2, p. 181, as quoted by Lee, Beauty and Ugliness, p. 87.

other objects and the observer can experience pleasure insofar as it is the object alone which absorbs him.

In Lipps, aesthetic involvement with the object is stronger than it is for either Munsterberg or Lee. For Lipps the aesthetic pleasure consists of participating in activity which takes place in the aesthetic object. (How the observer is able to do this and how the observer is in a sense the ultimate source of the activity going on in the object will be dealt with in the chapter on Lipps.) Suffice it to say now that this phenomenon of participation which is referred to by Lipps as Einfühlung or empathy, is a prerequisite for aesthetic pleasure and for Lipps as well as Munsterberg the object maintains a central position in the aesthetic experience because the aesthetic pleasure is, in a certain sense, attached to the object.

We see that considerations concerning the relationship between the experience of pleasure and the aesthetic object are involved in the development of a concept of empathy.[1] In addition,

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[1]Consideration of this problem is also central to the aesthetic of George Santayana (excerpts from "Sense of Beauty" in Modern Book of Aesthetics, ed. Melvin Rader [New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1935], pp. 136-145.) He has developed a theory which has great similarity to the emphathists. According to his view beauty can be seen as a quality of an object as color, proportion or size. This comes about by referring the pleasure of the sensations from an object back to the object that caused the sensations. Santayana's "objectification of pleasure" (ibid., p. 142) is basically the attribution of what he believes to be the aesthetic quality, i.e. pleasure, to the object. Through this attribution pleasure is transformed to Beauty. The empathists also believed that more is attributed to the object than the sensations of color, shape, etc., but they did not discuss this "more", the aesthetic quality, in terms of the quality of pleasure. Rather the aesthetic

there are certain problems concerning cognitive functioning in the aesthetic experience which the empathy theories come to answer and which seem to have played an important role in the development of the systems of empathy.

Just as when we say "it is a beautiful vase" we are telling something of our pleasure reaction so, at the same time are we involved in taking cognizance of certain shapes and colors. And not only of shapes and colors but in the aesthetic experience we take cognizance of qualities going beyond mere shapes and colors and attribute words like "dynamic," "moving," "gay," "quiet." But let us start from the beginning and see what cognition of shapes and colors is, and how cognition of other qualities relate to them.

Implied in the views of the empathists is the following view of cognition. In the elementary cognitive processes there is a well-defined correspondence between the qualities attributed to an object and the visual sensations "transmitted" by the object. There is in us a sensation of red upon focusing on an object and we see the object as red. The epistemological problem of how we know that redness is an "objective" quality is not important here. The point is that there is a psychological phenomenon by which a sensation in us causes us to draw a conclusion about an object focused upon. In the aesthetic experience, however, there no longer seems to be a correspondence between visual sensations and attributions. The

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qualities attributed to the object were basically those of activity and movement. These had pleasure-dimensions but were of a more defined character, than the general quality of pleasure in Santayana's aesthetic.

qualities attributed to the aesthetic object go beyond the visual sensations transmitted by the object. It is a familiar phenomenon that we ascribe dynamic and even human, life qualities to inanimate aesthetic objects. This seems in fact to be a perfectly natural way for conveying our impressions of a work of art. Apparently then, the observer maintains an illusion regarding the aesthetic object.[1] He sees more in the object than the object ostensibly has to show. If we now ask how this takes place, the empathy theory provides a ready formula. The source of the attributes which we ascribe to the object that do not correspond to sensations caused by the object, is in ourselves. What it is that takes place in ourselves and whether it is really "taking place" depends on which theory we speak of. In all of them there is some type of activity taking place in the observer. In each of these theories we may speak of ordinary qualities and aesthetic qualities attributed to the object.

Before examining this further we should point out that it is possible to question the validity of the phenomenon which we are describing. It is possible to maintain that fundamentally the

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[1]We are referring to illusion in the sense that E. H. Gombrich discusses it. (Art and Illusion [Pantheon Books, 1960], Introduction, chaps. 7 and 9.) Illusion is not a figment of one's imagination but the very way of seeing things. Gombrich does differ from the empathists in that he extends illusion to all perception while the empathists imply the existence of some primary sensations. He feels that one can't differentiate between primary sensations and illusory qualities or secondary sensations. "There is no rigid distinction between perception and illusion" (p. 29).

aesthetic experience is no more illusory than any other cognitive process. This position is taken, for example, by Rudolph Arnheim, a Gestalt psychologist who negates the role of empathy in aesthetics.[1]

When we say that an illusion takes place in the perception of an aesthetic object, we assume that the sensations that can be caused by an object and that can be said to correspond to a "reality" in the object are necessarily of an "elementary" type--e.g. color--and that the entire visual phenomenon must be built up from there. According to Arnheim this is fundamentally incorrect.[2] An object may incorporate complex qualities which can only be conceived in their entirety. It is these complex qualities or patterns which can be considered as the aesthetic qualities of an object. (Arnheim feels that whenever we see an object as a unified pattern we are seeing it as an aesthetic object.[3]) These patterns have a real objective existence and meaning and do not come into being by means of an illusion on the part of the observer.[4] Rather the meaning of the expression of the object is self-evident. "Expression is an inherent characteristic of perceptual patterns."[5] The expression in an object does not have to be associated with human emotions or

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[1]Rudolph Arnheim, Art and Visual Perception (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1954).

[2]Ibid., pp. 361-376.

[3]Ibid., p. 31.

[4]Ibid., p. 368.

[5]Ibid.

experiences. "Expression has its origin in the perceived pattern and in the reaction of the brain field of vision to this pattern."[1] Arnheim does not believe that the pattern of an object is static and we impose upon a static situation dynamic associations. Rather he feels that an object seen as a pattern expresses movement to begin with. This perception consists in the formation within oneself of a complex of sensations which in their entirety correspond exactly to the pattern. Thus the complex situation is the same as in any cognitive process in which a sensation in the observer corresponds to a quality of the perceived object.

By maintaining such a view Arnheim places himself among the "objective" aestheticians of whom we spoke earlier. The raison d'etre of empathy is to make precise a subjective aesthetics, an aesthetics where the subjective elements become embodied in the object. This must be qualified in Lipps' case where the qualities of the object are expressions of a greater mode of Being but can only be realized through the observer's experience. For the empathists then, it is a basic premise that one cannot in "reality" perceive aesthetic qualities in an object and these must come about by some kind of illusion. It is important to realize, however, that this is a premise and involves an interpretation of the aesthetic experience which one may dispute as, for example, Arnheim does.

Let us consider briefly the nature of the illusion which the

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[1] Ibid.

empathists ascribe to an aesthetic experience. Here we shall have to treat Lipps separately from Lee and Munsterberg. For Lee and Munsterberg the aesthetic qualities of an object correspond to something that is "going on" in the observer, something that is put into or attributed to the object. For Lipps the aesthetic qualities do already exist in the object in a metaphysical sense, i.e. they underlie the physical objects, but they are not obvious on the perceptive level except through the interpretation of the observer. So for all practical purposes the observer attributes illusory qualities to the object according to Lipps as well as Munsterberg and Lee.

For Lee and Munsterberg what takes place on the cognitive side of the empathy theory in the attribution of qualities can be described (at least theoretically) in more or less concrete psychological terms. The aesthetic object transmits data to the observer which are received in the form of what we may call primary sensations. These are the sensations which correspond directly to the "real" non-aesthetic qualities of the objects, e.g. the redness of an object. These sensations arouse, as a result of associations and memories, that which may be referred to as secondary sensations.[1] What is the

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[1]There is a difference between the classical definition of primary and secondary qualities and what has been discussed here as primary or secondary sensations. The empathists and particularly Lee and Munsterberg are not interested in the epistemological problem of the existence of qualities in an object as were Locke and Berkeley. The problem for these classical philosophies was whether there are qualities in an object that are conceivable without reference to human sensations. If there are such qualities they would be referred to as primary qualities. Other qualities which had to be felt were referred

nature of the secondary sensations for the empathists? For Munsterberg they consist of kinaesthetic muscular activities on the part of the observer; for Lee, they consist of the ideas of activity as derived from memories of past activities. This shall become clearer in our discussion of Lee. In either theory there are present in the observer complex psychological states. (In Munsterberg psychological states are equated with physiological states.) These states are interpreted as qualities of the object of perception and these qualities constitute the aesthetic content of the object. As a result an object is seen as moving or dynamic, i.e. the lines and shapes seem to move and stretch and bend. Since movement is associated with the animate and living this means that the object seems to take on life and vitality. Now how are the secondary sensations attributed to the object? The answer which forms a crucial part of the theory is that for the

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to as secondary qualities. Locke felt that qualities of extension, motion, figure were primary qualities and had an existence independent of the observer while color and odor were secondary qualities and depended upon the observer. Berkeley felt that neither primary or secondary sensations have an existence outside of the mind of the observer.

Lee and Munsterberg are not concerned with the problem of the reality of the qualities of an object. They take the common sense view that there does exist an object out there but that is aside from their main concern which is a psychological one. Their interest lies in the sensations the observer receives, the retinal image, the vibrations of the ear drum. They are interested in the qualities of an object only as they exist through the sensations. The secondary sensations are those which are not directly attributable to the object (as are the primary sensations) but are a result of the primary sensations.

Lee and Munsterberg are not trying to say anything about the outside world except to describe the functioning of man's mind in relation to certain objects in it. They do not make the jump from discussing man's mind to positing (as Berkeley does) all there is in the world is man's mind.

observer there is no essential difference between the primary and secondary sensations to which we referred. The mechanism by which primary sensations are sensed as being a reality in the object applies equally well to secondary sensations. The question now arises as to what conditions must be prevalent in order that there be aroused in the observer these secondary sensations.

We shall see further within the system of each empathy theory the conditions for the cognition of aesthetic qualities.

The basic questions asked by the empathists are then the following: What is the mechanism for the illusion that accompanies the perception of the aesthetic object? Secondly, what is the basis for the pleasure and satisfaction--equivalently, the displeasure and dissatisfaction--that is part of the aesthetic experience?

In answering these questions we shall have to examine carefully the process of perception and attribution, the distinctive qualities of an aesthetic object, and the relationship between the aesthetic experience and other life experiences. As we have indicated, though Lipps, Lee, and Munsterberg may all be referred to as empathists, they have rather different approaches in these matters.

CHAPTER I

THEODOR LIPPS

A. Einfühlung and Pleasure

Theodor Lipps is the psychologist of art with whom the concept of Einfühlung is most widely associated. It is characteristic of Lipps' theory that the concept of Einfühlung by which the aesthetic experience may be explained, is applicable to a much broader range of phenomena. As a special application of this concept the problems of pleasure and cognition, as they have been presented in the introduction as problems of the aesthetic experience, can be solved.

Einfühlung is for Lipps the phenomenon by which the activity that one sees in objects outside oneself is felt as the activity of one's own self. Briefly stated, this extension of one's self is possible because all objects in the world, animate or inanimate, can be viewed as participating in a common mode of Being. What we have called illusory qualities are just the manifestation of Being in objects but since the observer can only realize Being in an external object by applying the categories of Being in his own experience, empathy is then also the process by which the self is attributed to external activities and expressions to give them an inner dimension.

Einfühlung extends to all objects and situations and involves a pleasure-displeasure alternative. For Lipps the basic source of pleasure is involvement in activity. More correctly, for Lipps

pleasure is meaningful only as a mode or a quality of activity.[1] To say that we derive pleasure from an experience is to say that we are "positively" (rather than "negatively") involved in an activity. This is an underlying premise of Lipps' theory and is the reason that Lipps explains as the basis for the pleasure in aesthetics the ability of a person to involve himself in activity outside of his person.

Lipps begins by discussing the ordinary circumstance of a person doing something and the simple pleasure received from absorption of the self in his activity.[2] In contrast with this one could go through activities perfunctorily with concern only for the outcome of the activity and not with the pleasure of experiencing it. (This might be what differentiates the practical situation from the aesthetic one.) In any case, this is the simplest type of activity that interests Lipps. He refines the idea of activity as he goes along. It comes to apply to something that someone else is doing but which the observer experiences as if he were doing it himself.[3] It is at this second stage of activity that we can begin to apply the term Einfühlung. The observer is not overtly active but his self can experience the activity manifested in other persons or objects. He uses the example of the acrobat to explain this. Although the observer is not himself swinging and balancing, as he watches the

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[1]Lipps, Ästhetik, Vol. II, p. 3.

[2]Ibid., Vol. I, p. 97f.

[3]Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 114, 120.

acrobats he experiences the strains and stresses inside himself that he would experience if he were going through the overt actions of the acrobat. (What exactly he means by experiencing the inner activity of the person observed will become clearer as we proceed.) In particular, it does not mean--as it does for Lee--that internally the observer is in a physiological state similar to that of the acrobat. It is the same self though, which is ordinarily activated through his own activity that is activated here where he is merely watching someone else engage in overt activity. Lipps then goes on to discuss activation of the self where there is no actual movement being observed but where movement or activity is being depicted or suggested, as in a picture of a man carrying a heavy load on his back.[1] Lipps goes even further than this and claims that the self can be activated where there is not even a suggestion of something actually moving, but activity can be interpreted in the object because energies and forces seem to be manifest in it.[2]

In all of these cases pleasure is felt as part of the activity that takes place in the self. Pleasure resides in the activation of self, the extent to which the quality of self can be manifested in a situation. Pleasure is an inseparable part of the activity in the same sense as brightness is a quality of color. Lipps explains this

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[1] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 143.

[2] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 167.

by the following analogy: Consider a string of a piano or a violin. Such a string has certain natural frequencies of vibration which are determined by its structure or its nature. If one of these vibrations is imposed upon it the string will maintain this vibration. On the other hand, if some other mode of vibration is given the string it will be set into motion but the motion will rapidly die down. According to Lipps, then, full activity on one's own part or in reacting to something else means activation of the self. This self has certain "natural" modes of activity. If a superimposed activity is in agreement with the nature of the psyche the experience is pleasant, if not it is unpleasant.

> Auch die Seele hat wie die Saite ihr eigentümliches Wesen, ihre eigentümliche Organisation, Konstitution, Struktur, kurz ihre eigentümliche "Natur."
> . . . Es gilt der allgemeine Satz: Ein Grund zur Lust ist gegeben in dem Masse, als psychische Vorgänge--oder Komplexe von solchen--also Empfindungen, Wahrnehmungen, Vorstellungen, Gedanken und Zusammenhänge von solchen, der Seele "naturlich" sind.[1]

B. Self and Self-Activity

Although Lipps never really defines what he means either by self or activity of the self, an understanding of these should emerge from an explication of his whole theory. The concept of self-activity

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[1]Lipps, Asthetik, Vol. 1, p. 9f. "The soul too has, just as the string, its own being, its own organization, constitution, structure; in short, its own nature. . . . The following general statement is valid: A basis for pleasure is given by the extent to which psychic events--or groups of these--namely, sensations, perceptions, mental images, thoughts and combinations of these are natural for the soul."

is at exactly the center of Lipps' theory of Einfühlung, for there can be no experiencing of the activities of another person or object without self-activity and, on the other hand, no attribution of activity to the object without self-activity.

Let us try to clarify this concept of self-activity. The word "activity" suggests movement. It might be thought that self-activity means movement of the person's body, i.e. overt movement. There is certainly reason to believe that overt, physical movement of a person involves self-activity. When this movement is done intensely or purposefully it is in fact evidence of self-activity. To the extent that there seems to be a will working itself out in the overt activity, there is manifestation of self-activity. But although it might be underlying overt movements, self-activity in its general sense cannot be equated with the overt activity of the person. We have already indicated that this is the case, for self-activity occurs even when the observer is not doing anything. It occurs through the contemplation of activity in something outside the observer. But if the self is not identified with the person that acts overtly, one might have the impression of the self as an independent think-like body functioning inside the person. On the basis of the violin-string analogy one might think of the self according to Lipps as a system inside the person more or less separate from the outside world but which may be set into motion by certain forms of excitation. Lee and Munsterberg understand the manner in which a person relates to aesthetic objects in terms of an internal

mechanism which responds in certain ways to certain stimuli. Munsterberg even identifies this system in psycho-physiological terms. Lipps makes no attempt to do this--not because of the limitation of psychology at the time he wrote. Rather it is because this "model" of the self does not correspond to his general theory. The point is that for Lipps, whatever physiological and psychological activity may take place in the person contemplating an external activity, it is in fact the external rather than this internal activity which is to be understood as the self-activity.[1] How are we then to understand this seemingly paradoxical notion of self-activity?

The difficulty we encounter here is due to our trying to separate the concept self-activity into two entities: a self and activity of this self. Actually the two can only be understood together. The self is that quality by which an activity becomes relevant to a person. The self comes into being simultaneously with its activity. It is not prior to it. The person who exerts great effort to move a rock "feels himself pushing." The verb "feels" has here two objects: "himself" and "pushing." It is not that the self exists beforehand and is suddenly activated. Rather the person becomes aware of himself as he becomes aware of his pushing and this suggests that the concept of self is dependent upon that of activity. One can, of course, insist that the concept of self is an a priori concept and that feeling oneself is an empty idea. But it would then

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[1]Lipps, "Einfühlung, innere Nachahmung und Organempfindungen," trans. M. Schertel and M. Rader, ed. M. Rader, A Modern Book of Aesthetics, pp. 291-304.

be very difficult to introduce a notion of Einfühlung whereby the self is extended beyond one's body.

To analyze these concepts further we must broaden the notion of activity as it occurs in the phrase self-activity. The standard case of self-activity is that of a man intending to push a rock and carrying through his intention. A basic point that Lipps makes is that self-activity is manifested not only in the execution of the will but also in the frustration of the will.[1] Thus if a man does not succeed in moving the rock and the forces he exerts are not realized in movement we may still speak of self-activity. So activity, first of all, does not mean mere movement. What does take place here is the exertion of a force and our notion of activity must include at least this:

> Ich meine mit der Tätigkeit in diesem Zusammenhänge, wie auch sonst, alles das in mir Erlebbare, das irgendwie etwas von Kraft in sich schliesst, jede Betätigung oder jede Weise des Sichauswirkens einer Kraft oder irgendwelche Krafte; ich meine damit alles, in welchem ich ein solches Sichauswirken einer "Kraft" erlebe.[2]

The concept of activity here is a very general one. From the restricted notion of movement we pass to the more general one of exertion of force. Although we have been giving examples of the self being defined by overt activities and exertion of physical force,

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[1]Lipps, Asthetik, Vol. I, p. 99.

[2]Ibid., Vol. II, p. 8. "I mean with activity in this connection, as in general, everything that I can experience that somehow involves energy, every application or every manner of carrying out a force or various forces; I mean thereby everything whereby I experience such a carrying out of a force."

this is because that most clearly exemplifies our point. But since the self is more than that which engages in overt activity (this being only one example of self), the force need not be a physical force. Any striving, and in a sense, any feeling will be referred to as activity.

Lipps is not explicit but seems to be conveying the view that the self is the compound of various inner "goings-on" in the person. These "goings-on" which define the self are not merely a matter of the observer receiving various sensations but are more abstract processes. They are not, on the other hand, merely the ideas that one forms about objects that he sees. The activities that define the self might be characterized as "felt ideas."[1] As we shall see, they are abstractions necessary for the cognition of objects, but also involve an appropriate feeling tone. Psychologically this feeling tone might be described as a releasing of tensions, feelings of expansion and striving. It is now possible to formulate Lipps' notion of self-activity in the following way. A person has a concept of self which is an expression of the Self underlying all objects. This concept is not directly accessible to him. It is only made accessible by putting it to work, so to speak, in the form of activity. Activity is then the means for the realization of the concept of self. There are various types of inner activities that a person may experience. The self then is a many-sided concept, for

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[1] Ibid., Vol. II, p. 3.

different self-activities may illuminate different aspects of this concept.

More important, one's own realization of self can be enlarged by more experience. Indeed, one could interpret the extension of the concept of self as essentially the import of the empathy concept for Lipps. The self is extended by application to objects outside the person, and as a result the observer experiences in his self aspects of Being through the internal activities that the object seems to express. It is, perhaps, this participation in the greater Reality inherent in every object which is at the base of the pleasure of self-activity.

C. Einfühlung and Cognition

1. Inner ideas

We have seen that Lipps explains pleasure in the aesthetic experience as a quality of self-activity. Now we come to the point that the concept of self is also necessary for the very cognition of objects.[1] The concept of self is necessary for cognition since one understands an object aesthetically only by ascribing some aspect of the self to it. Let us examine this more carefully.

There are certain experiences which are only known to a person as they occur in himself. They cannot be perceived outwardly and so

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[1]This point is not made explicitly by Lipps. What Lipps does is to illustrate at length (Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 169-204) the role played by empathy in grasping the content of visual percepts.

the ideas associated with these experiences cannot be abstracted entirely from oneself. The idea of a finger, for example, is fully grasped in terms of external perception and we can readily conceive of another person having fingers in exactly the same way that we have. But the idea of pride, or sorrow, or anger is not fully grasped by external perception. We have never fully seen these emotions outside ourselves and are not capable of abstracting the internal experience from ourselves. In order then to understand the expression of sadness in a person's face, for example, the observer must apply the internal experience he himself has felt in making such an expression. This internal experience is an aspect of the self and it is the concept derived from this internal experience of sadness which explains the external expression for the observer. It should be noted that the external expression is not understood by ascribing to it any present experience or specific memory of this experience.[1] Rather it is the abstract concept derived from this experience of the self which explains the expression in the object in much the same way that the concept of gravity "explains" the phenomena of falling. In either case, one merely collects under one name a large number of experiences, yet we think of this as an explanation. This is important because it means that the introduction of the notion of self is part of a person's understanding of his experience of the world, his cognition of objects. This implies that as far as the observer is

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[1] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 112.

concerned there is one Self for all objects. If Lipps admitted that each object had its own self that could be known objectively then the object's meaning would be entirely evident from its external expression. But his view indicates his presupposition that there is an underlying reality which is basically one for all objects. A person can only know his own self as it is expressed in activities, but since that which is underlying other objects is of the same substance he can apply his self to these objects, i.e. he can apply internal ideas to a situation. This attribution of the idea of internal experiences helps one understand a present situation like the attribution of the color red to an object helps one understand it.

2. Perception of emotions

There are various types of inner ideas that involve aspects of the self.

As has already been indicated in our discussion, emotions are some of these internal ideas that must be applied to understand the expressions in a person or object.[1] We can never experience another person's emotions from his expression because of the variety of internal changes occurring during feelings of emotion. One then cannot understand an emotion except as his emotion. All we can know of another person's emotion is its external manifestations. For example, when we perceive an expression of pride on a human face all

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[1] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 107.

we can know of the person's pride is its external manifestation, say certain movements in the neighborhood of the eye. It is difficult to maintain that the emotion of pride can be fully equated with these movements. This emotion almost certainly involves some inner mechanism which cannot be felt by a person other than the one who has the feeling of pride. As a result the emotion of pride has never fully existed for one person except in himself. The object has meaning for him as an object of pride only if he applies this concept from himself. We see then that on one hand the suggestion of emotion in the external expression brings forth the idea of this emotion in the observer. On the other hand we cannot understand or fully take cognizance of this expression without referring to its inner source, that is, the emotion to which expression is being given.

3. Perception of forces

But there are less obvious examples than that of facial expressions depicting emotions which illustrate the fact that we apply concepts based on our own experience to objects of the world. The idea of force is an excellent example of this.[1] We can see in an object that is perfectly motionless the manifestation of forces. But what are the forces? We either see movement or not--neither case seems to signify the concept of force. Here, with Lipps, we are referring not to the physicist's technical, formal concept of force, but rather to the import of this notion in everyday terminology.

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[1] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 169ff.

Force can be explained as a manifestation of a will. We apply to the object the idea of exertion or of will. That is because whenever the observer executes a force it is because of his will, so it seems that the object too has a will. For example, in order to understand the relationship of a pillar to the building it supports we apply the idea of an exertion of energy upward. Otherwise the pillar would have no meaning in relation to the building to which it is contiguous. The pillar seems to be manifesting its will because it suggests to the observer the idea of exertion. This idea has been abstracted from experiences of holding up some heavy weight and exerting a will to keep the arm up with the weight bearing down on it. By applying the concept of exertion we make connections between different objects in order to understand or "appercoive" them. Every object then can potentially be seen as dynamic and alive.

4. Perception of unity

Forces playing on each other are how the self imposes an order upon disparate objects or on different parts of one object. From a more general view it can be said that the self brings unity within an object so that the various parts of the object are beheld as one.[1] Unity itself is therefore a basic inner idea which goes to constitute the self and which when applied helps one perceive and understand the object. For example, although a tree consists of many components we perceive it as having an underlying unity. Is this because the parts

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[1] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 195.

are physically attached to one another? Lipps is not satisfied with this answer. The connectedness itself does not constitute unity; we still have to impose this concept somehow on the tree, for as long as the tree is seen as occupying more than just a point in space there is no perceptual unity.[1] As we have indicated before, regarding other types of objects, we must apply some concept to the object to bring it together. What is the basis of this conceptual unity? Lipps prefaces his own answer as follows:

> Es gibt, dies muss unbedingt festgehalten werden, schlechterdings keine vorstellbare Einheit ausser der Einheit die wir in uns erleben.[2]

The unity of the tree is then also based on attributing our concept of self to the tree. There is no contradiction to the unity of a person if different parts of our body occupy different parts of space. Indeed there is a certain co-ordination between the various parts of the body as they are seen as belonging to one self. By analogy there is no contradiction to the unity of the tree if its branches extend in different directions.

In a manner of speaking we may say, as Lipps does, that the tree is endowed with life during the course of perception. On the metaphysical level this refers to the realization of Being in the object. On the psychological cognitive level it means that the activities of the self are employed to "put the tree together."

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[1] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 196.

[2] Ibid., p. 197. "It must be maintained without qualification that there is absolutely no imaginable unity other than the unity we experience in ourselves."

Lipps claims that there is a natural tendency to form the analogy of the branches of the tree with outstretched arms. A person understands the connectedness of the tree which connects the parts of his body and applying it to the tree which is reminiscent of his body.

This process by which we see forces in natural occurrences or unity in objects is referred to by Lipps as Einfühlung or Beseelung. Einfühlung in this specific sense is the application of human concepts to explain phenomena which are not directly human experiences. The psychological premise is that a person builds up in the course of his life a self-centered science in which external phenomena are understood in terms of the same concepts as are internal phenomena.

To summarize the various stages of attribution, Lipps starts with applying to human expressions and movements interpretations of the inner feelings that accompany them.[1] He extends this down to inanimate objects where, although there are no feelings accompanying its external being, the observer fully understands it only by attributing to it internal concepts.[2] These internal concepts that are called forth and applied have their origins in the observer's experience as Being is manifest in himself, but on applying these inner concepts to an object the observer does not refer to or remember the experiences that contributed to the formation of the concept.[3]

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[1] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 105.

[2] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 161.

[3] Cf. the discussion regarding the perception of emotion through facial expressions. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 112.

It should be noted that there are some inanimate objects which suggest or express these internal concepts of force, unity emotion, etc. better than others and these might be considered aesthetic objects.

The unity of these internal concepts are what constitute the self for Lipps. He never makes clear just how they are held together. He is more interested in showing how these various inner ideas function, how they are applied in order to be able to interpret the world. Not all things which might be considered inner ideas form what Lipps calls the self. Intellectual reasoning, for example, occurs upon perceiving objects and is in fact the most obvious way to explain relations in what is seen. But Lipps, in fact, goes to pains to point out that intellectual understanding is not an example of Einfühlung.[1] Lipps bases his point of view in this connection on the fact that we never speak of "feeling ourselves think." Thinking is somehow not a feeling process. There are a number of possible explanations for this. It may be that the self is to be confined to those inner ideas which somehow involve a carrying out of an intention or a will. From this point of view the concept of self conveys the notion of participation in a form of Being. Or there may be a purely psychological distinction between the inner activity of intellectual thought and the inner activity connected with emotions or with

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[1] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 125, and Vol. II, p. 11.

striving. In the latter there are actual physical sensations that are felt in the ordinary sense but then sensations are too diffuse to be localized. The thinking process, on the other hand, involves no physical sensations and in a certain sense, therefore, is not actually experienced. Lipps, however, seems to incline to the first explanation. In drawing the distinction between the intellectual judgment and other "self-activities" he points to the fact that the former came to us effortlessly and without involving any inner forces.[1]

The process of Einfühlung occurs because the only self the observer knows is himself. The experiences that go to make up the substance of his concept of self are his experiences. As a result, when this concept is applied to explain connections outside himself, it is still the same concept which is applied to connections within oneself. This results in the dual character of the Einfühlung concept for Lipps: we endow the inanimate object with life (we apply our self to it to make it understandable in human terms) and we participate in that life, i.e. the self-activities that are needed to bring meaning to the object. Thus our self that is activated through the perception of the object projects outward to the object and inward to the observer. The experience becomes one.

D. Relationship between Philosophical and Psychological Approaches

Lipps has devoted most of his philosophical discussion to

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[1]Ibid., Vol. II, p. 12.

presenting examples of situations of varying degrees of complexity in which the object takes on meaning through the application of the self concept.[1] His metaphysical presuppositions can be inferred from his view that the apparent, material, or external reality is not self-explanatory but that there is a greater internal reality about which one must have knowledge in order to understand the external aspects of objects. Otherwise, Lipps could explain the branches of trees, for example, as a physical concept. But he doesn't. Our interpretation is that he sees them expressive of some inner reality. There is underlying the visible tree a reality not reducible to any physical concepts. This Reality is common to both people and objects, to the animate and inanimate. There is a unity between what seem to be disparate selves, for underlying the variety there is a basic substance of which all selves partake. By experiencing his own self then the observer is able to participate in this Reality underlying everything. He can interpret all objects through the basic experience of this Reality in himself. Every object expresses this Reality but the observer can only realize this by attributing the concepts of his own self to the object. A rock can become alive and express its Being for the observer only if the observer realizes that which the rock suggests (e.g. a force downward) from his own experience, by applying his own self to the object.

That the objects of the world have an essential nature which

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[1] Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 169-204.

is not reducible to physical concepts is a premise which Lipps shares with Husserl.[1] Lipps also shares with the phenomenologists the view that this essential nature must be directly experienced.

> When I see the sculptured image of a man in the act of rising, the sense-feelings which a real man would have who thus arises, do not exist for my esthetic contemplation, any more than my own sense-feelings so exist. What I immediately intuit in the plastic form is its willing, the power, the pride. Only this lies for my contemplation immediately in the contemplated object. And to the esthetic object belongs absolutely nothing but what lies immediately in the object of contemplation. The thought that also the sense-feelings would unquestionably appear in such a man if he were a real man, is an ingredient added by my reflection.[2]

Where Lipps would take issue with the phenomenologists is in the question of the nature of the essences that underlies the objects of experience. In Lipps there is just a single essence, the Self that pervades the objects of the world. All significance and meaningfulness in nature is reducible to the single phenomenon of life--or equivalently, the self which seeks life. "Die Natur is uns überall lebendig. Überall, wie gasagt, sehen wir Aktivität, Passivität, Streben, Tun, Erleiden."[3] Phenomenology, on the other hand, allows for a variety of phenomena corresponding to the various forms of experience.

It should be emphasized that there is a certain tension in

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[1]E. Parl Welch, Edmund Husserl's Phenomenology (Los Angeles: The University of Southern California Press, 1939).

[2]Lipps, "Einfühlung, innere Nachahmung, und Organempfindungen," in M. Rader, Modern Book of Aesthetics.

[3]Lipps, Asthetik, Vol. I, p. 163.

Lipps. Although the observer refers to his own experience to explain an object this does not mean that he is re-living any past or present emotional state. This would make Lipps' view an associationist view, as we shall find Lee's view to be. Rather the experiences he refers to are the forms of Being in himself and the feeling that occurs for Lipps is not then a physio-psychologically based experience. It has what might be called an existential meaning. It is the realization or awareness of the forms of Being. Lipps might describe this realization as involving feelings of striving, expansion and fulfillment and what sounds like a release of tensions. Although this sounds as if he is describing psychological activities which we automatically assume to be grounded in a neuro-physiological system, Lipps is not using these terms to indicate this. Rather this is the way he can describe the experience of the realization of the forms of Being in the self. We can think of this experience of realization occurring in ourselves as a result of our participating in some activity. But the crux of Lipps' argument is that this awareness also occurs in us by observing other objects and realizing the forms of being in them which, as has been indicated, is possible because of the underlying unity in all things.

The Gestaltist view as expressed by Rudolph Arnheim can by contrast help us understand the self aspect of Lipps' thought. Arnheim feels that there are underlying structures or patterns in the world which are expressed in every object.[1] There are then

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[1]Rudolph Arnheim, Art and Visual Perception, Introduction.

inherent in the visual pattern of an object expressive qualities which are perceived immediately. Since the object is perceived as a whole the underlying structure as expressed through this individual object is self-evident. For Lipps the underlying Reality expressed in an object can only be realized by referring it to the self of the observer. In some ways Lipps is actually very close to Arnheim since the self is not a personal self for Lipps in the sense that the observer is experiencing something exclusive to his own cumulative experience. Rather the observer is applying the objective categories of Being to the object. His self automatically becomes involved because he can only understand the objective categories in his own self. Both for Arnheim and Lipps the objects are expressions of some objective reality. For Lipps this objective Reality can only be understood by channeling this Reality through the observer's self. This produces the psychological experiences Lipps has described but is grounded in the realization of Being rather than in any definable psychological system.

There is throughout Lipps' discussion a certain tension between what might be called the naturalistic descriptions and mystical presuppositions of his aesthetic. On one hand he goes to great lengths to explain and describe what goes on in the person in perceiving various types of objects. These "goings on" or psychological experiences of the inner ideas help define the self. But on the other hand these psychological activities do not entirely define the self, i.e. the self is not reducible to these activities. Although these

activities are what the concept of self means for the observer and should be understood as thoroughly as possible, the self is not just the sum total of the activities. There is an indefinable dimension to the self which goes beyond the psychological functioning of the inner ideas. Lipps can be interpreted in this way because he wants to apply the self to other objects and not to see it as something which only occurs in the individual observer. The self therefore is a state of Being applicable to all objects. As has been discussed, it manifests itself in the observer's consciousness through what we have termed the "inner ideas." The psychological processes are expressions of Being in the observer so that for Lipps the psychological processes can fit into his Idealistic framework. They are subsumed under them. They can only explain matters to a certain point beyond which Lipps must posit the mystical Self.

Lipps does try to explain the psychological processes to some degree and does not make it an entirely mystical process. On the other hand he stops short of the point where the psychological process can be made into a mechanistic principle where, for example, physio-psychological processes might be automatically called forth in relation to certain external stimuli.

The psychological analysis in Lipps has this significance: It explains why the concept of self that a person formulates cannot be abstracted from his person. This means that a person can have only one concept of self, and not a separate self concept for each object perceived. This is crucial for Lipps because this implies

that when the self is seen as active in an external object, it is the same self that is active in personal experiences. This is the means by which the person participates in the activity of an external object.

It is interesting to see how Lipps' theoretical framework of Einfühlung is reduced in Lee (who is not really involved in Idealist presuppositions) to a machanical, psychological response which takes place automatically as a result of specific causes and effects. Although Lee negates her earlier physiologically based aesthetic[1] for one which she feels to be more like Lipps' theory, her view of Einfühlung is not based on the premise of the realization of Being in the world but on the question of the perception of dynamic qualities in objects. This is one aspect of Lipps' integrated view, but his view is involved with the entire relationship between man and objects of the world. Lee develops this one aspect to understand aesthetic perception.

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[1]Vernon Lee, "The Central Problem of Aesthetics," translated into German in "Zeitschrift für Aesthetik," 1910, and included in Beauty and Ugliness and Other Studies. Here Vernon Lee repudiates her physiologically based aesthetic in the essay "Beauty and Ugliness," and attributes responsibility for this mistaken view to her collaborator, C. Anstruther-Thomson. The latter essay also appears in the collection Beauty and Ugliness and Other Studies.

CHAPTER II

VERNON LEE

A. The Process of Aesthetic Perception

For Lee empathy is basically a matter of visual perception. In fact, all objects are perceived according to Lee through a kind of empathic process. The observer attributes his reactions in perceiving an object to the object of perception.[1] We shall interpret Lee as saying that this general principle applies to all objects, the aesthetic object being a special case of this principle.

In objects which portray movement or are moving it is obvious that one attributes movement to it as one attributes red to the sensation of red, but Lee's basic concern is not with the object which portrays movement, nor does she believe as does Lipps or Arnheim, that there is an innate expression or activity in the object. There are no activities or movements going on, so Lee must ask why inanimate objects, lifeless lines, can seem to be more dynamic and moving than actual moving objects.[2] The answer is that the observer attributes to the object not only that which

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[1]Lee, Beauty and Ugliness, pp. 17-23.

[2]Ibid., pp. 354-356; also pp. 111-115 in her discussion of Bernard Berenson where she emphasizes the distinction between movement in represented objects and lines which express movement unconnected with representation.

corresponds to specific sensations in the object but also what we have referred to as illusory qualities. The quality of movement in an inanimate object is such an illusory quality.

1. Basic principle of aesthetic perception

This attribution of what we have called primary and secondary sensations (or qualities corresponding to something in the object and illusory qualities) is founded on what one might deduce as Lee's basic principle of perception. This principle then, includes the perception of both these types of qualities. Lee does not explicate this principle at any length but it seems to be at the core of her aesthetic, binding the various aspects of her theory together. She has referred to it as "the merging of the perceptive activities of the subject in the quality of the object of perception."[1] The constitution of the object as far as the observer is concerned is to be equated with the totality of the observer's experience in perception of the object. The observer's only knowledge of the object (which comes immediately with perception) is the way it affects him. This becomes the definition of the object for him. For example, one sees a rose to be red. One doesn't talk in terms of one's reactions to the object. One doesn't say "My reaction to the rose is that it is red" but rather assumes one's reactions to be equivalent to the object and simply says "The rose is red," thereby making an inversion.[2] But there are

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[1]Vernon Lee, The Beautiful, p. 63.

[2]Ibid., p. 58.

many things going on simultaneously in the observer. The sensation of the shape of the rose, the color of the rose, associations to one's experience with the rose as a flower. All of these experiences together contribute to one's cognition of an object. The nature and complexity of the object depend on what is going on in the observer during perception. The process going on is more complex in relation to some objects than to others. As we shall see later, what "goes on" in the observer during perception of aesthetic objects is at least in part the reliving of past activity and the idea of this activity is perceived in the object alongside with the other characteristics that make up the aesthetic object.[1]

Lee indicates her general perceptive principle in the following:

> It would no more occur to me that the movements were in my mind than it would occur to me that, except as a result of scientific teaching that which I call color is a phenomenon taking place in my eye and nerves or that which I call a musical tone is similarly not in the vibrating body or the air but in my own organs of perception.
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> In other words these qualities are, in my case thought of and perceived as really existing in the external shape or object however much my reason tells me that a motionless object or a mere two or three dimensional form cannot be performing any of the actions which I attribute to it.[2]

Illusory qualities as well as qualities which correspond to specific sensations can be perceived in the object because both are a result of something going on in the observer and what goes on in the observer during perception of an object appears to go on in the object.[3]

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[1]Vernon Lee, Beauty and Ugliness, p. 53.

[2]Ibid., p. 102f.

[3]Lee, The Beautiful, p. 113f.

For example, in relation to the illusion of lines moving in an inanimate object Lee says:

> Such movement of lines we have seen to be a scheme of activity suggested by our own activity in taking stock of a two-dimensional shape; an idea or feeling of activity which we, being normally unaware of its origin in ourselves, project into the shape precisely as we project our sensation of red from our own eye and mind into the object which has deflected the rays of light in such a way as to give us that red sensation.

The psychological basis for this perceptive principle is, as has been mentioned, the non-localizable character of many sensations and feelings. If a person can locate a sensation in himself such as the sting of a bee then this sensation is recognized as occurring in his body and not in any other object. If he feels himself in motion then he recognizes this as his activity and not the activity of any other object but there are feelings and activities that take place in the person which he cannot locate because of their complexity. Then he tends to objectify his feelings in the object of which he is most conscious and aware of at the moment.[1]

2. Lee's original kinaesthetic view of perception

In the original essay on "Beauty and Ugliness" (in collaboration with C. Ansruther-Thomson), Lee proposed that the activities going on in the observer in reaction to an aesthetic object could be explained in terms of physiological activities. Lee held a kinaesthetic point of view whereby the observer experienced bodily activity; muscular and

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[1]Lee, Beauty and Ugliness, pp. 30, 53.

respiratory activity in the perception of an object and the object was then perceived in terms of these activities. For example, according to this theory if there was an expansion of the lungs in reaction to an art object the object could be perceived and described as "expansive." Later Lee negated her early kinaesthetic views based on a James-Lange theory of emotion for a view whereby a more abstract process takes place in the observer. "The phenomenon of Einfühlung [then] . . . can be explained by reference to merely mental phenomenon."[1]

It is then obvious from the discussion of perception that the attribution of activities to the art object is not added to the process of perceiving the shape but rather this is the way the observer perceives the shape. Association takes place instantaneously.

According to Listowel[2] this had been noticed by Robert Vischer, one of the first psychologists to apply scientific methods to aesthetics--that the attribution of aesthetic qualities appears to take place instantaneously upon perception. This idea was also used by Stern to counter anti-associationist theories of aesthetics which felt that the reflection involved in associating, calling forth

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[1]Ibid., p. 821.

[2]Earl of Listowel, Critical History of Modern Aesthetics, pp. 54-57. Listowel here discusses Robert Vischer's Über das Optische Formgefühl (Leipzig: Hermann Credner, 1873), and P. Stern's "Einfühlung und Association in der neuren Ästhetik," Beiträge zur Asthetik, Bd. V, ed. Lipps and Weiner, 1898.

past memories would require too long a time and be too conscious a process.

Although we have given some indications as to what differentiates attribution to the aesthetic object from the non-aesthetic one we have as yet to analyze what Lee means by the art object and what she means by the activity of the observer that is attributed to the art object.

She calls her philosophy a "formal-dynamic" aesthetic.[1] "Dynamic" as we shall see is essential to her view of empathy as the attribution of activity to the object. But this idea of formal-empathy ostensibly sounds quite incongruous since in popular thought we usually think of empathizing or identifying with the human element in the story or content of a work of art, and Vernon Lee seems to be advocating an empathy with the formal elements of visual objects, the lines, colors, etc. If we think of empathy though, as part of the cognitive process as discussed above there is no problem of empathizing with the formal aspects of an object. One can attribute the qualities which fit with the formal elements of an object as one can attribute emotions to an object of human content. Let us see how Lee integrates the formal elements into her system as a whole.

3. The three levels of perception

According to Lee there are three levels of perception.

There are the simple sensations which are taken in passively,

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[1]Lee, Beauty and Ugliness, p. 353.

i.e. they do not demand any effort of attention on the part of the observer. For example, a strong smell overwhelms one and is sensed. The only activity that has to take place is the basic functioning of the senses; there is no particular activity outside this.[1] In direct contrast to this is the second level of perception where the object brings about a very definite activity on the part of the observer in relation to the object. Here the observer attributes to the object among other qualities that of the purpose and function it plays in relation to the observer's life. The observer must do something or not do something in relation to the object but he does not on this level of perception merely contemplate it.[2]

The aesthetic level of perception stands in contrast to the practical and simple-sensation levels discussed above. What takes place here are not simple sensations but a group or combination of sensations in relation to each other. These cannot be "taken in" but in order to be perceived connections must be made between the various sensations. These connections involve some kind of activity on the part of the observer. We shall see the complex nature of this activity later.[3] The important thing for the present is that there are three levels of perception to which can be applied Lee's "perceptive principle." The aesthetic level seems to stand between the

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[1] Ibid., pp. 22-29.

[2] Ibid., pp. 8-13.

[3] Ibid., pp. 29-34.

simple sensations where there is no active involvement on the part of the observer and the practical level where involvement leads to overt action. In the aesthetic situation, on one hand, the attribution of qualities of purpose and function which would lead to overt action is inhibited but, on the other hand, in order to experience the aesthetic object the observer must by some internal activities make the connections between the sensations. It is in relation to this view--that in order to have cognition of an object some activity must take place on the part of the observer--that Lee is closest to Lipps, but it also indicates the artificiality of their connection because the inner activities which make sense out of objects for Lipps are the applying of universal categories which for Lee it is applying that which is abstracted from the observer's past personal experiences.

B. The Aesthetic Object

1. "Shapes" and "Things"

Lee calls the object of the third aesthetic level of perception "shapes" and of the second practical level of perception "things." Shapes are abstract geometric forms; they are not recognized as anything that serves any function or means anything other than a relationship of lines and colors. They are basically spatial figures in relationship to other spatial figures. The observer, by concentrating on these qualities, inhibits attribution of qualities of function and purpose which would make the "shape" into a "thing." The aesthetic object as shape is contemplated for its own intrinsic worth as a spatial figure and not for anything beyond this. But these abstract, geometrical figures are not independent creations. They are what visually

go into making up the objects of the world. Those objects which serve as functions for something outside themselves are "things." The "shape" or art object are then aspects of the "thing" or practical object.[1] "The word beautiful implies the satisfaction derived from the contemplation not of things but of aspects."[2]

In order to perceive an object aesthetically the observer will concentrate on the geometrical form in the object and ignore what the object represents or for what it can be used. For example, one doesn't aesthetically perceive a house as a place of shelter. Rather one might concentrate upon the triangular shape of the pointed roof. The house itself though is not ignored. The "thing," the non-aesthetic aspects are necessary to bring one's attention to the "shape." First one is attracted to the house as a house but then upon looking at it one gets involved in concentrating upon the triangular shape of the roof. It is the house which directs your attention to the shape since aesthetic empathy is constantly interspersed with the non-aesthetic, the shape with the thing.[3] However, during the process of aesthetic empathy the observer views the object as divorced from the thing.

> Artistic contemplation is a combination usually a rapid and so to speak, contrapuntal alternation of many other mental processes with the particular one we have called Aesthetic Empathy, such aesthetic empathy never

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[1] Ibid., pp. 14-19.

[2] Ibid., p. 19.

[3] Ibid., pp. 90-97.

> arising except where the attention has been directed on to given visual, audible or verbal forms by some of the dozen practical uses, emotional needs and intellectual interests which press into their service or accidentally appeal to the eye, the ear and the habit of speech.[1]

In differentiating further that which characterizes the aesthetic from the non-aesthetic, the "shapes" from the "things," Lee feels that the perception of a thing requires information that you cannot gain from the perception of the object. This is information that you can only gain from knowing about the object in other contexts. For example, if you see the chair in the picture of Van Gogh's bedroom and attribute to it the qualities of "chair that can be sat upon, and belonging to Van Gogh," you are involving information from other experiences, that of the purpose of chairs and that this is Van Gogh's room and therefore his chair. But if you see the chair as a certain relation of geometrical forms it does not involve knowledge outside the shapes themselves, "knowledge which the shapes themselves do not afford."[2]

It is because of this that Lee feels that "shapes" are two-dimensional while one of the characteristics of a thing is its cubic dimension, its "three-dimensional aspect."[3] The cubic dimension involves knowledge which the shapes in themselves do not afford. One infers experiences unrelated to the perception, the seeing of the object. In recognizing a three-dimensional object one infers

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[1]Lee, Beauty and Ugliness, p. 363.

[2]Ibid., p. 113.

[3]Ibid., pp. 84-89.

locomotor experience, the object is seen with the knowledge of how it is if seen from a change of place or position. For example, one infers what one knows about a house; that if we would walk around to the side of the house we would see that it recedes backwards. But the shapes themselves do not tell this. This does not mean that pictures drawn in perspective are unrelated to art, for although the three-dimensional aspect is not the aesthetic part the shapes may well be found in a three-dimensional picture, the three-dimensionality of it making the picture more interesting in general and more capable of drawing the observer's attention to the shapes, the two-dimensional sensation-relationships of the object.

Once the observer is brought to concentrate upon the "shapes" the makeup of the shapes themselves is to enclose the observer's attention in the object because the shape has a "reiterative character," it directs the activity of the eye back upon itself so that the observer is held entirely in contemplation of the various sense relationships of the shape.[1] Lee's implication is that the eye's attention is held better by shapes than when an object is seen as a "thing" where cultural associations might distract the observer from the object itself.

2. The universal character of "shapes"

Paradoxically the experience of perceiving a shape, although it requires limiting one's point of view in regard to what is seen, is

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[1] Ibid., p. 74-77.

richer and deeper than that of perceiving a "thing." The "thing" represents something specific whose associations are fairly limited and demanding of certain actions toward it. The "shape" for example, of triangle and the activities that occur in perceiving it can be applied to all possible experiences of triangle. The question arises though that since shapes are aspects of things, why can't one see the shape as one looks at the thing? Why does the thingness of the object have to be inhibited in order to perceive the shape with its universal character? This is because in perceiving an object the observer is attempting to understand it and grasp it in terms most readily available, the object's more striking aspects. The understanding or grasping of a thing means understanding how the thing functions, how you are to relate to the object. This relationship to the object as a function shuts off the object from being understood as shape. It inhibits the ability to see the shape simultaneously as one reacts to the thing.

In contrast to this when dealing with shape the only way of understanding it is by finding connections between the different parts of shape itself rather than connecting the shape with the observer or with something else. The observer makes these connections by means of geometric ideas.[1] These ideas come from the collection of past experiences having in common this specific idea of movement.

It seems that the "shape" with its abstract character is the

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[1] Ibid., p. 38.

fitting object of aesthetic contemplation for Lee because it most directly brings forth the idea of movement in the observer. The "shape" corresponds to activity because visually movement can be considered a geometric idea; it follows a certain pattern of points and lines. Originally Lee felt that the activity which connected the points and lines was the actual activity of the eyes and that this movement gave rise to a specific feeling of movement which was synonymous with bodily activity. But Lee later repudiated the kinaesthetic aspect of this theory and also felt that the eye movements are not varied enough to account for the subtle differences between shapes. The eyes though could suggest abstract ideas of movement.[1]

3. The idea of movement in the object derived from memories of activity

The limited eye movements could not explain the variety of movements seen in an aesthetic experience. Also the activities of the eye could not explain the pleasure in the aesthetic experience. Lee wanted a more refined idea of "shape" perception, of movement to connect the sensations, so she developed the view that the eye movements and bodily parts connected with adjusting the eyesight bring forth the idea of Movement in general which enables the memories of past movements to be associated with the shape. The memories of these past movements is what is attributed to the object in order to explain

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[1]Lee, Beauty and Ugliness, p. 355.

for Lee the qualities of movement in inanimate objects. But these memories of activity are not memories of specific activities; for example, the observer stretching upward in this place at that time. Rather they are the residue of countless past activities. That which is attributed to the object is the idea of movement taken from one's memories of all past movements that are associated with the present act of perception.[1] It is this idea of movement rather than the actual eye movements which connects the points and lines together and which unifies it into a "shape."

It should be noted that ideas for Lee are not Ideas in a Platonic sense as they are in a sense for Lipps. They are part of the psychological process and do not stand for a greater reality outside the psychological process.

Lee refers to the re-living of past activities as the awakening of dynamic dramas in man. She characterizes the whole process as

> the attribution of our own modes of dynamic experience to the shapes whose perception is a result not merely of the bodily activity of our eyes but of the "mental" . . . activities of measuring, comparing, combining of the visual data and is accompanied by the reviviscence of motor experience as distinguished from muscular sensations in what we call our mind.[2]

No actual muscular sensations have to take place for in Lee's later aesthetic motor the idea of activities have replaced muscular sensations. There might nevertheless be people who may actually feel muscular reactions to a work of art but these kinaesthetic reactions

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[1]Lee, The Beautiful, p. 64.

[2]Lee, Beauty and Ugliness, p. 143.

are secondary and are not the way we perceive the object. They occur only after the perception and attribution of dynamic qualities to the art object.[1]

C. The Centrality of the Concept of Activity in Lee's Aesthetic

Activity or movement then is the center of Lee's aesthetic from which emerge the various aspects of her aesthetic. The movement attributed to the object is defined by the idea of activity felt in the observer; the aesthetic object comprises the formal characteristics of the object which are taken in most simply and directly by the activities of the eye and become interpreted in terms of ideas of activities associated with it. Why, though, is activity or movement so central to Lee? Why does she identify her aesthetic so strongly with "dynamic" and "active"? She does not, as Lipps does, deal with actual movements, for example, of acrobats or dancers. Rather she is interested in the quality and feeling of movement in the seemingly static lines and shapes. Possibly it is because this quality of activity or movement distinguishes the living from the non-living. Heightened activity is life-enhancing. This heightened activity, it can be deduced, occurs for Lee in the aesthetic realm of perception rather than the practical realm which ostensibly might seem to be the more active, because aesthetic perception can call upon the totality of experiences of a past activity of the observer (and possibly experiences of the race too). Practical activity is limited to

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[1] Ibid., p. 357.

specific acts in relation to specific situations. Therefore associations with a practical object must be relevant here and now. The aesthetic object goes beyond any specific time-and-place situation and can be associated with an activity as it has occurred in all times and places. Also, once a practical activity is completed the attention of the observer is diverted to another object, but in perceiving a "shape" one can re-live the activity in the mind over and over again. In fact, part of the characteristics of the "shape" is that it is reiterative. It brings the attention of the observer back to it again and again.

Having emphasized the special role of activity in Lee's theory, we can look upon her distinctions between shapes and things in a different light. Up until now we have seen the distinction in that "shapes" can call forth a vast store of memories, whereas "things" by the immediacy of their nature are more restrictive in their associations. But can't "things" too call forth chains of association and can't we imagine that in the contemplation of a "thing" an observer will also be involved in a drama of some kind? Would Lee consider this a limited aesthetic experience or would it not be an aesthetic experience at all? In seeking an answer to these questions we realize that the special role played by shapes is due to the special nature of movement memories. Lee postulates that the memories of movement exist at a more accessible level of consciousness than other memories:

> Einfühlung is a mere regrouping of senses of movement which are forever present in our consciousness, indeed which seem to form its woof. Feelings . . . of dynamic

> conditions and attractions are among the immediate, the primary data of our psychic life.[1]

Lee speaks as if the senses of movement in the observer are so basic to his makeup that movements might be thought of as part of the very mechanism of perception. The result is that ideas of movements form a part of the process of perception. On the other hand, other memories are recalled after the object has already been perceived. Therefore they are no longer felt in the object and their experience is of a different nature than the aesthetic experience.

D. Aesthetic Pleasure

There is a basic similarity between the sources of aesthetic pleasure for Lipps and for Lee. For both the pleasure consists in living and in being active through perceiving the object. But for Lipps this activity is a present calling forth of universals but does not have to relate to some personal experiences of one's own, while for Lee the activity of the observer is being re-lived. Similarly, whereas for Lipps the beauty of the aesthetic object depends upon the pleasantness of the present experience, for Lee it depends on the pleasure of past experiences which are being recalled.

"Aesthetic" for Lee can be equated with activity, or more precisely, with the re-living of activity in the mind of the observer. In some cases "shapes" awaken in the observer movements or memories

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[1]Lee, Beauty and Ugliness, p. 83.

of past movements which have pleasant associations to the observer, and some shapes correspond to activities which, when re-lived in the mind of the observer, are felt to be unpleasant.[1] (A "thing" of course does not bring forth the aesthetic activity that a shape does, so that there is no problem of confusing the unpleasant of the "thing" and the unpleasant of the "shape." For the unpleasantness of the "shape" refers only to the associations with movement, while the "thing" brings in other cultural associations.)

One's aesthetic preference will depend upon whether the shape brings forth memories of activities which are felt to be pleasant or unpleasant. The pleasant, of course, are preferred to the unpleasant. The implication here is that if in perceiving a shape there are brought about unpleasant memories in the observer this will still be consistent with the aesthetic nature of the experience. For Lee as well as for Lipps both beauty and ugliness depend upon having an aesthetic experience in the first place, i.e. as long as there is a pleasure-displeasure alternative it can be considered aesthetic if the other conditions set forth apply. Lee felt that one can perceive something as aesthetic but yet not enjoy it for it doesn't bring forth pleasant associations. That might imply that living fully or intensely as one does in the life-enhancing aesthetic experience is not necessarily pleasant.

> Just as sympathy with the grief of our neighbors
> implies in ourselves knowledge of the conflicting states--

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[1] Ibid., p. 17.

> hope, resignation, pain and the efforts against pain--which constitute similar grief in our own experience; so the aesthetic attribution of our own dynamic modes to visible forms implies the realization in our consciousness of the various conflicting strains and pressures . . ."[1] [Italics mine]

In this way Lee might be answering the problem as to how one could find aesthetic the portrayal of the crass or ugly. One experiences the ugliness but there are other conditions, e.g. that it is perceived empathically as a dynamic configuration of lines, that make it an aesthetic experience.

Lee claims that the observer receives pleasure from the revival of past activities insofar as the activity in relation to the shape is "favorable to our existence."[2] What makes an object "favorable to our existence"? Lee has indicated that the idea of movement was pleasurable if it had pleasant associations and from the "favorable to our existence" idea Lee implies that movements have pleasant associations if they in some way enable man to adapt to life better. We interpret "adapting to life" in the following way: Activity or movement is essentially of practical value. It denotes a change in the state of man and environment. If this change benefited man's survival it would have pleasant associations and be "favorable to our existence"; if it indicated a change which threatened man and was unfavorable to man's fight for survival it was found as unpleasant.

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[1] Ibid., p. 20.

[2] Ibid., p. 21.

It is interesting then that in spite of the formal aspects of Lee's aesthetic, according to this interpretation, the roots of her aesthetic are in the practical world. Activity is so central because activities occurring from the minute a person is born threaten or enhance his survival.

E. Concluding Remarks on Lee's Theory

Although Lee shows how "activity" is connected with man's relationship to the world it is not clear how re-living of activities in the mind fits in with the general psychic makeup of the observer. It seems that this experience of what Lee calls the "dynamic dramas" is not just an intellectual realization of the idea of activity but it has a "felt" quality. Nevertheless she does not make clear any theory of emotion to help us understand the interaction between the memories of activity in the mind and the observer's feelings and emotions. Originally in the essay "Beauty and Ugliness" she held a kinaesthetic view of empathy which is an answer to the question of the interaction of emotion and activity. The activities that were experienced in the observer in relation to an object were physiological activities and Lee equated physiological activity with emotions (in adherence to the James-Lange theory).[1] It was these emotions as bodily activities that were interpreted into the art object. Actually Lee had solved two problems with her kinaesthetic view of empathy. Both the emotions felt in perceiving an art object and the qualities

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[1] Ibid., p. 94.

projected onto the art object are to be translated into concrete physiological terms. The activities perceived in the object corresponded clearly to the actual physiological feelings of activity in the observer.

Lee had to abandon the kinaesthetic view because she felt that there wasn't sufficient evidence of bodily activity occurring in the perception of the object.[1] Although, as we have indicated, her later views give a more refined and complex view of the activity perceived in the object, there is much obscurity concerning the relation of these memories of activity and the feelings and emotions of the observer.

Lee, in her aesthetic, attempts to answer the questions as to how motionless objects can appear to be active and moving,

> why motionless shapes should awaken pleasant or unpleasant dynamic dramas in our mind, and awaken them very often far more vividly than the sight of bodies which we know to be really moving through real space, as my gallery observations testify to the real movements of people and carriages seeming dull and dead compared with the intensity of movement attributed to painted or carved shapes.[2]

In order to explain this Lee postulates the "shape" to be the aesthetic object at the expense of the "thing." That is, since there is a correspondence between the lines and points of a shape and the idea of movement Lee had concentrated only on the formal aspects of an object in order to explain motion in inanimate shapes. She postulates as

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[1] Ibid., p. 352.

[2] Lee, Beauty and Ugliness, p. 356.

irrelevant to the aesthetic experience the subject-matter or "content" of an art work. This results in an interesting dilemma. On one hand, by concentrating on the formal geometric aspect of things she is dealing with the most universal aspect in that it is not limited to this specific phenomenon. It is the theoretical construct abstracted from specific phenomena and applicable to other situations. In this way the aesthetic experience is a broad one for Lee. But on the other hand Lee is limiting that which can be universalized to a certain type of thing, e.e. to geometric, formal relationships. By giving only the underlying visual constructs she excludes many aspects of life which could be introduced into the definition of an art work and enrich these lines and shapes. For example, a line might express great grace in its curve but if this curve is also to portray the bending of a man's back in prayer in a Giotto scene, the curve is given another dimension of meaningfulness which enriches the basic construct. Although Lee feels that attention to the content of an object would inhibit one's ability to see it as a shape, we would venture to say that part of the richness of art comes as a result of seeing how the formal relations and subject-matter of an aesthetic object fit together so well. Of course for Lee there is richness in the basic construct in itself, the rhythm of a line, for example, is significant because it brings into play the activities or movements of one's experience and it is these activities which are the essence of life. Someone who would <u>not</u> define life in Lee's terms of movement could argue that which has been argued above. This criticism might be

levelled at formalistic views of art in general. By proferring a view in which the aesthetic object gives the artistic construction, the formal relationships between lines and shapes, they exclude other levels of meaningfulness for these lines and shapes.

Lee's aesthetic theory gives us a system which answers in her terms the cognitive problem in the aesthetic experience, e.g. the problem of why we attribute illusory qualities (or qualities which do not correspond to any specific sensation in the object) to the object. The illusory qualities of movement are what concerned Lee. She explained them as a result of re-living past movements and attributing the idea of this activity unto the object. But Lee does not deal with empathy as a pleasure function. In Lipps it is such because pleasure is a function of empathic cognition, i.e. the realization of the forms of Being in the self. But for Lee attribution itself does not bring pleasure or displeasure to the observer. Rather the object causes pleasure or displeasure insofar as the observer experiences "dynamic dramas" which were pleasurable or not pleasurable, but not as in Lipps and Munsterberg as a correlate of attribution. There is a machanical process involved whereby there is a cause-effect relationship between object and observer. But since the effect is diffused the observer locates it in the object. It is nevertheless the cause-effect situation which is the basis of pleasure.

As we have seen, the dynamic dramas that are attributed to the object are an abstract type of activity in the observer. We now come to a much more direct view of activity. This is the view of

Hugo Munsterberg who propounds a view similar to Lee's early kin-aesthetic view and extends the understanding of activity in his concept of a "tendency to action."

CHAPTER III

HUGO MUNSTERBERG

Hugo Munsterberg's aesthetic is also based on a theory of aesthetic empathy. As do Lipps and Lee, he feels we attribute something of ourselves to the object. In all cognition we attribute qualities to the object but, as has been pointed out, aesthetic empathy tries to explain the attribution of certain illusory qualities. We can explain these illusory qualities, according to Munsterberg, as an extension of the general concept of cognition. Just as we attribute primary sensations (as explained in the Introduction) instantaneously without being conscious of associating them with one's experience, so too secondary sensations are perceived in the object. As does Lee, Munsterberg seems to feel that when we cannot localize a sensation in ourselves (as we can in the case of the bee-sting) we attribute it to the object. The same principle applies to the attribution of qualities at every level of perception. For Munsterberg all perception can be understood in terms of physiological conditions. In the aesthetic case that which occurs in the observer in reaction to an art object is the contractions of muscles, nerve tensions, etc. and it is this which is attributed to the art object.

> Yes every aesthetic demand in regard to space-division and outline, light values and color, content and meaning and expression can be understood as the result of psychological conditions and all can be

> related to the causal working of ganglion cells and nerve fibres, muscles and tendons, laws of nervous irritation and irradiation, nervous excitement and inhibition can explain the totality of facts.[1]

Before we can understand that physiological activity which occurs in relation to aesthetic objects we have to see what happens on other levels of perception.

A. The Three Levels of Perception

The simplest level of perception for Munsterberg is one in which he feels there is no reaction in the observer outside of the activity of the eyes and visual processes. The observer focuses on the object and records the image in the visual field and attributes to the object its shapes and colors. Visually

> we are conscious of the local relations of optical points not from the optical sensations themselves but from the movement sensations which originate with the eyeball muscles and that these muscles move by brain-reflex for the purpose of bringing one point after the other into the middle point of most distinct vision.[2]

Munsterberg's emphasis on the movement sensations rather than optical sensations has importance for his theory later on. For the present the important fact is that there is a level of perception which affects no other part of the body except the eyes. "The eyes follow the outlines of the visual objects but the body as a whole remains unmoved."[3]

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[1] H. Munsterberg, Principles of Art Education, p. 107.

[2] Ibid., p. 81F.

[3] Ibid., p. 83.

This occurs because the observer is involved in something else and attributes geometric aspects to the object, i.e. sees its forms but does not attribute any other quality of meaningfulness to the object. We are surrounded with visual forms which do not affect us more than being passing images.[1] But there are some images which cause the motor sensations effected by the eye movements to "radiate to other muscle groups of our organism."[2] This brings us to the second level of perception.[3] This is caused by an object in our field of vision which demands some practical action.[4] The visual image plus the observer's psychological state of attention forces the observer to attribute to it not only certain geometric qualities but qualities of purpose and function.

> We may say that the idea which brings about the action is more than the optical impression; it is the optical impression plus the idea of the change to be reached by the movement, an idea which results from associative

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[1] Ibid., p. 83f.

[2] Ibid., p. 82.

[3] There are those who would flatly deny this. As has been mentioned, Rudolph Arnheim claims that there is no perceptive activity outside the eyes and visual field of the brain. He criticizes those who say that the visual object brings forth associations which bring about muscle or nerve reactions. This is for him one type of perception imposed upon another. (Art and Visual Perception, pp. 361-376.) Arnheim though is building his view on different axioms than Munsterberg. For Arnheim, inanimate objects have inherent in them dynamic qualities so that all one needs to view qualities of movement is the simple visual apparatus. But for Munsterberg the only way that dynamic qualities can be perceived in the object is if the observer puts them there. They can be put there only if the visual impression brings about in the observer associations to movement.

[4] Munsterberg, Principles of Art Education, pp. 82f-84f.

> processes in the brain. We may say in general: whenever the given optical impression connects itself with the idea of a future effect or change, the resulting motor impulse is felt and interpreted as our own activity, directed towards the future end.[1]

An object perceived as such affects not only the movement of the eyes but the motor impulse in the brain stimulates the muscles in other parts of the body. This object which is seen as possessing a function demands some action from us and so the stimulation of muscular groups of the organism takes place. The observer must change the object, retreat from it or approach it and use it. The object is seen as it relates to things outside itself. In contrast to the first level of perception this second case is one in which the observer reacts in relation to an object. There is bodily movement that goes on besides the activity of the eyes. In the first case of the eye movements the muscle sensations are localized in the object. That is, as in all cognition one is not conscious of eye movement sensations but only of the image that they produce. In this second case, that of the stimulation of other muscles of the body in reacting to a practical object the movement sensations are felt in the arms, legs or other relevant organs. This of course is because the sensation is not a diffuse one and one does not have to localize it in the object but is localized, for example, in the arm by the very raising of the arm to grasp something, or the foot to walk. There is no doubt as to where the movement sensations are occurring.

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[1] Ibid., p. 84f.

> In this second case the optical impression does produce a bodily movement but the corresponding movement sensation is felt as a state of one's own personality, as indication of the subjective reaction. We perceive the thing and we perceive ourselves as performing the action.[1]

The aesthetic level of perception stands between the two levels discussed above.[2] On one hand it is not like the first level of perception where the object only affects the eyes. Rather the person reacts as a whole person (i.e. a physiological organism) in the aesthetic situation. In contrast to Lee where the aesthetic object is the "shape," the geometric construction, in Munsterberg the object is seen as a geometric object only when the observer is not really paying attention to the object. The aesthetic situation is like the practical one in that it brings into play the same mechanism of stimulation of bodily activity. In the perception of the aesthetic object though, this bodily or muscular activity never culminates as it must in relation to the practical object, in overt action. The motor impulses remain inhibited. The question arises as to how the observer reacts, i.e. experiences the innervation of muscles without this resulting in overt action. The contraction of muscles in the arm makes the arm move. How could this contraction occur and not result in an actual movement? Munsterberg answers this with the concept of the innervation of antagonistic muscles. The observer in reacting to an object experiences the contraction of muscles as if he was going to

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[1] Ibid., p. 89.

[2] Ibid., pp. 85-87.

act towards the object but is inhibited from doing so by the movement of the opposing muscles which check and balance out the initial action. All the observer experiences is the tension between these muscles and the feelings of energies that result from this tension.

> The suppression and inhibition of the idea of practical future end thus creates a suppression of the real external movement, an effect which is produced in the organism by an innervation of the antagonistic muscles. That which the motor impulses produce is thus not an actual movement but a system of tensions and contractions which gives us subjective feelings of strain, effort, tension, direction, movement intention.[1]

B. Aesthetic Object

The basic question that must be asked is "Why is there an inhibition of overt action in relation to the aesthetic object?" Why does the physiological activity that occurs in reacting to an object not find fulfillment in overt action? First though, we must analyze the nature of aesthetic objects to see why they do not lead to overt action as practical objects do.

1. Isolation of aesthetic object

For Munsterberg the basic characteristic of the aesthetic object is that it is not viewed as a means to any other end but as an object of intrinsic value to be contemplated for its own sake. There is not in the observer's mind anything else besides the object to be contemplated. He is not concerned as to what the object can be

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[1] Ibid., p. 85f.

used for or to what it could lead.

> Is it not possible to come nearer to the object itself, to grasp its true reality to feel its life, to sink into it, to penetrate into its fulness[1]
> . . . . . .
> Is the world for us merely a material to be used and never a material to be enjoyed; is the object merely a cause to produce certain effects, never an end in itself; can our life be complete in itself if everything comes in question for us merely as a means to something else, and never as valuable in its own offering.[2]

In order to see an object as an end, for its own intrinsic value, one has to isolate it from other objects. One cannot see it in relation to objects outside the aesthetic object, for then it is just a contributing factor to something beyond the object. It is a cause for further effects. Isolation is the primary condition for an object to be considered an aesthetic object.[3]

2. Contrast of Scientific and Aesthetic Objects

In line with this Munsterberg tries to show that the scientific object is a type of practical object. It does not give us knowledge of things as they really are. An analysis of a scientific object tells us what the object is in relation to things outside itself, how it causes other things or what will happen to the object under various conditions.[4]

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[1] Ibid., p. 19.

[2] Ibid., p. 29.

[3] Ibid., pp. 19-24.

[4] Ibid., pp. 9-21.

> Science does not care at all for O itself. Even when science enumerates O's so-called elements it speaks in reality not of O but of its causal and logical relations to L M N P Q R and the whole alphabet of things.[1]

The scientific descriptive account of the elements of an object then "does not give any knowledge of the object itself but it tells us what changes can be produced through an analysis of the object, what effects we must expect from it."[2] Munsterberg thus attempts to counter the common view that science gives you knowledge of the object as it is while the aesthetic experience is a more fanciful, less real experience of the object.

As we have seen, Munsterberg feels that the opposite is true for only in the aesthetic experience is the object seen as it is, unconnected to things outside itself.

3. Unity of meaning in object

Although the aesthetic object is seen as isolated from other objects and not leading to any future end beyond itself Munsterberg does not feel, as Lee does, that the only aesthetic object is the "shape" or geometric relationships of an object.[3] One can recognize a chair to be a chair, i.e. one can attribute to a picture of a chair the function of being sat upon and not just attribute to it the qualities of shape and color, but this quality of being sat upon

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[1] Ibid., p. 16.

[2] Ibid., p. 14.

[3] Ibid., pp. 41, 63.

does not extend outside the picture. The observer does not consider sitting upon it or judge it for its comfort, etc. The object is aesthetic if the various qualities interrelate and hold together as a unity independent of other objects.

It is not that which we rope off and give a name to as thing A or thing B which is aesthetic but rather that which might be called the content in the object. Thing A or B has a certain continuity that connects it to the past and future. It cannot be seen in isolation. But it can express some meaning which is unconnected to anything outside itself. It is this unity of meaning in the object which is aesthetic.

Munsterberg feels that there are different types of unities of meaning in a picture, each one of which could be seen aesthetically, that is, isolated from things outside itself. An object can be seen as a unity of lines and shapes or colors but the highest unity and fullest aesthetic object is when the lines and colors best express the subject matter of the picture.

> The highest unity [is] that in which content and form themselves demand each other . . . What real art demands is that higher stage in which the special choice of lines and colors require each other to fulfill conditions of complete unity.[2]

It is not then only the psychological attitude of the observer who contemplating the object as detached from other objects, creates

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[1] Ibid., pp. 40-68.

[2] Ibid., p. 66f.

the isolation necessary to the aesthetic object. As we have just seen, the object itself must suggest a unified character and meaning. Further in order to bring about in the observer the psychological attitude of isolation of the object from other objects Munsterberg feels that the object must have an appearance of unreality about it.[1] If it looks too real then one can think of it as if it were a practical object with some future end beyond the object. "Beauty is lost when the appearance deceives us so as to give the impression of reality."[2]

Therefore Munsterberg feels that aesthetic objects have some characteristics which are unlike objects in real life. A painting is on a two-dimensional canvas so cannot be mistaken for a real situation. A sculpture is three-dimensional but the color of the material with which it is made is unnatural to the subject of the sculpture and so it too has an aura of unreality about it.

Of course, although certain types of objects are more easily isolated from any practical end there is no guarantee that the observer will not react to it as a practical object. In the end, whether an object is aesthetic is determined by the attitude of isolation the observer takes toward the object. There is no set object which is always aesthetic. It depends on the psychological attitude taken towards the object.

We can now understand why there is an inhibition of action,

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[1] Ibid., pp. 37-40.

[2] Ibid., p. 102.

why the physiological activity never culminates in overt action in relation to aesthetic objects. The aesthetic object is seen as isolated from other objects. It carries with it no purpose or future end for the observer and is not seen as it relates to the observer's life. It calls forth then no action on the part of the observer. The motor impulses which, according to Munsterberg occur when there is a real response to the object (i.e. not only a visual response) have no reason to bring about movement of the arms, legs, etc. and are inhibited by the antagonistic muscles. There are feelings of tensions and contractions in the observer in responding to the art object.

C. Attribution of Kinaesthetic Feelings to the Art Object

But Munsterberg is an empathist. The observer does not just experience the tensions and contractions in his own body in reaction to an art object. In fact according to the condition of isolation it is the object alone which absorbs the observer. He cannot be conscious of these tensions at the same time that he is absorbed in the aesthetic object alone. What happens then is that these bodily activities are felt as activities of the object.[1] There is an instantaneous attribution of the activities of the observer to the object. In overt activity the observer localizes his sensations in his arms or legs or head by the very movement or activity of these

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[1] Ibid., pp. 85-87.

organs but in relation to the aesthetic object overt movement has been inhibited and one cannot localize his bodily activities in any particular organ. These bodily activities are experienced in the observer as diffuse feelings of energy. He localizes them in that which is the source of his activity, the aesthetic object.

> Nothing beyond the idea of the optical impression was to be in our mind, thus we are not thinking of ourselves as objects, as empirical personalities, every thought concerning ourselves and our actions would lead us away and would link the visual impression with something else. The result must be that the feelings of strain and impulse which go on in ourselves are not projected into our body but into the visual impression.
> . . . . . .
> As soon as the visual impression is really isolated and all other ideas really excluded then the motor impulses do not awake actions which are taken as actions of ourselves but feelings of energy which are taken as energies of the visual forms and lines.[1]

The feelings or energy then that occur as a result of the tensions and contractions (the activities that never become externally realized) are attributed to the object and seen as characteristics of the object.

We have seen how Munsterberg's system of empathy answers some of the questions of cognition in the aesthetic experience. The secondary qualities of movement and activity are attributed to the object because there are physiological activities going on in the observer in reaction to the object which, as in Lee, cannot be localized in any sense in the observer but can be attributed to that in which he is absorbed.

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[1] Ibid., p. 86.

D. Aesthetic Pleasure

Munsterberg's theory of empathy contributes to the problem of pleasure in the aesthetic experience in an interesting way. An object is felt as pleasant or unpleasant according to how the object harmonizes with the physiological makeup of the observer.[1] If the lines of the object for example, bring about tensions and contractions which conflict with the natural tendencies of the observer then these bring about feelings of discomfort and displeasure in the observer.

> If the energies which we feel in the lines are external projections of our own energies we understand the psychological reasons why certain combinations of lines please us and others do not. As long as the lines are geometrical figures only any combination of lines has its right to existence, as soon as they represent energies we say that the aesthetic demand prescribes how the lines "ought" to be. They ought to be such that they correspond to the natural energies of our own organism and represent the harmony of our own muscular functions because every interference with the natural innervations of our system would turn our attention to our own body and would destroy thus the isolation.[2]

Underlying this view of pleasure is a basic philosophical view on the part of Munsterberg.

He feels that the observer must create an ordered world out of the chaos of sense impressions. He must perceive a harmony and agreement of parts in the world. He achieves this through aesthetic perception, i.e. by seeing an object cut off from any connections outside itself--seeing it as a unity of intrinsic relationships. An observer

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[1] Ibid., pp. 88-100.

[2] Ibid., p. 88.

can realize the harmony in the world if he himself is in harmony and agreement with the objects of the world.[1] If the energies of the object conflict with his own natural energies the state of isolation is broken and the observer turns his mind to his own body and is conscious of himself and his own feelings. In this state the observer does not gain aesthetic pleasure since aesthetic pleasure is felt only through grasping the harmony of the world by realizing the intrinsic value of the object. Empathy then is a prerequisite for pleasure in the aesthetic experience.

E. Concluding Remarks on Munsterberg's Theory

As can be seen from everything that has been said until now, Munsterberg's aesthetic theory focuses on the pleasure of experiencing an object as it is in itself, i.e. for its own intrinsic value in order to find a unity and harmony in objects of the world. But what is the "itself" inherent in the object which makes it so important to experience an object for its intrinsic value? Is it, as in Lipps, the knowledge of underlying reality of an object which is gained through the aesthetic experience? Munsterberg speaks of isolation and attribution as bringing "repose" in the object[2] "for Beauty demands only that we feel ourselves into the will of Nature."[3] This might indicate metaphysical presuppositions whereby the observer would be at one

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[1]Munsterberg, "The Problem of Beauty," Philosophical Review, XVIII (1909), pp. 121-146.

[2]Munsterberg, Principles of Art Education, p. 114.

[3]Munsterberg, "The Problem of Beauty," p. 134.

with the object and be participating in the Being of the object. This Being would then be the underlying reality, the intrinsic value of the object.

But Munsterberg does not carry through these implications. He does not seem to feel that there is a ready-made world behind experience but turns to the structure of the observer's experience to explain the harmony between the observer and object. Since, on the psychological side, Munsterberg explains the structure of the observer's experience in psycho-physiological terms he must seek an explanation to what he means by "intrinsic value" and "repose" from this frame of reference.

First one could say that the intrinsic value of the object is its unity of meaning, i.e. simply how the various parts of the object "hold together." This line balances that and best expresses the object so that the object stands as a unified whole. The observer is held in contemplation of this unity of the parts. But as we have seen, these relationships of lines to the whole are perceived not only by following these intrinsic relations with the movements of the eyes but by reacting to them through the innervations of muscle impulses, the tendencies to action. It is the energies which are a result of these tendencies to action that define the picture. The intrinsic value for which the picture is isolated is then these energies that are attributed to the object. The aesthetic object is isolated so that it can be experienced for its intrinsic value but the intrinsic value is the experiencing of the energies of the

observer in the object. The philosophical concepts of "intrinsic value" and "harmony with an object" become psychological concepts but one doesn't know whether this is really what Munsterberg wants. He doesn't integrate, to any great extent, his philosophical concepts with his theory of the psychological processes. They seem to be parallel views which touch at a few points.

As far as the psychology of attribution is concerned he does not deepen our understanding of the process much beyond Lee. He does though contribute an important concept in his "tendency to action." The aesthetic experience is not a passive one. In fact, the aesthetic object brings about in the observer the same physiological activity as the practical object except that it doesn't culminate in overt action.

Munsterberg's psychological theory is based on a James-Lange theory of emotions which equates emotion with physiological activity. Aesthetic enjoyment is one type of emotion and it means for Munsterberg the physiological activities, the tensions and contractions that occur when there is a tendency to action.

Munsterberg proposes his theory on these theoretical grounds rather than as the results of experimental inquiry which would be necessary to validate this type of aesthetic theory. But much experimental inquiry that has taken place since Munsterberg propounded his theory in 1905 has been found to agree with his idea of a "tendency to action" in that experimenters were able to make actual measurements of muscular micro-movements.

CONCLUSION

As a result of the foregoing chapters it is possible to characterize Lipps' views as "philosophical" or "metaphysical" while Lee can come under the category of "psychological." There seems to be some ambiguity in Munsterberg but in the final analysis it would seem that his emphasis is on the psychological rather than the philosophical.

The "metaphysical" is concerned with the underlying reality of objects of the world. Lipps' concern with what is happening in the observer is because of the observer's role in realizing qualities of Being in an object. So although Lipps goes to great lengths to explain the psychological state of the observer reacting to a work of art, these psychological processes are not his basic interest but are significant in that they are part of a deeper situation.

Lee and Munsterberg are basically concerned with the psychology of the person. Munsterberg is seeking a knowledge of the world in the harmony of the objects of the world. But this can only be found if the observer is in harmony with the objects of the world. This harmony is experienced by the observer through the psychological process of empathy; Munsterberg's philosophical goal is reduced to a psychological process. So that for Munsterberg as well as Lee there is no activity occurring in the object in which the observer participates as there is for Lipps. Rather the activity

with which they are most interested is the "goings-on" in the observer and how these "goings-on" are transferred to the object to make the object appear alive and moving, or also in Munsterberg's case to bring the observer into harmony with the object. Therefore Lee and Munsterberg do not basically concern themselves with a metaphysical framework. They emphasize individual details of the mechanism of reaction and attribution, i.e. the psychological process by which movement and activity are perceived in the object.

The problem arises though, that Lee and Munsterberg's "psychological" view might be taken as answering metaphysical questions. Particularly, concerning the problem of the reality of objects in the world one might take their view to be that objects exist only in the observer's mind. But actually we cannot deduce this, for the empathists are interested in the psychological existence of the objects. (Even Munsterberg, as we have pointed out, reduces his interest in the true nature of objects to the psychological process.) That is why they emphasize the object as sensations in the observer's mind. It is not necessarily because they feel that the object only exists as sensations in the observer's mind. They do not come to answer this question.

There are nevertheless questions which might arise concerning the nature of the psychological existence of an object. Does every object have a psychological existence which remains the same or does it change with each new experience? Is there some psychological essence which the observer perceives and to which he adds elaborations,

distortions, expressions, i.e. illusory characteristics, or is the object perceived with different illusory qualities considered a different object in the mind of the observer? This type of question can be answered within the scope of Lee's and Munsterberg's "psychological" aesthetic. It would seem that in both Lee and Munsterberg the object exists psychologically anew each time. For in both the illusory qualities are seen as an integral part of the whole aesthetic object and not as a basic object plus the expressive qualities added. Also Munsterberg feels that one is constantly creating a world out of the chaos of sense impressions which implies that objects change for the observer with each new experience. (It is necessary though, for purposes of explanation, to make the distinction between the basic sensations of an object and illusory qualities in order to discuss the aesthetic experience as distinguished from other experiences.)

One further observation that can be made on the basis of the distinction between the empathists as "psychological" and "metaphysical." This is that theoretically speaking, according to Lee and Munsterberg, we would with more knowledge of the human makeup be able to trace reactions in relation to an aesthetic object to specific psychological or physiological processes in the observer. We would be able to explain what are the psychological causes of the aesthetic experience. Lipps' metaphysical view would imply that there are qualities in the aesthetic experience which go beyond the observer and the object. Since the ultimate nature of these is

unknowable the aesthetic experience could never be entirely understood discursively.

The implications of all the theories discussed in this paper are that the empathic process is synonymous with the aesthetic process. It is not just one aspect of the aesthetic experience but rather defines the aesthetic experience. It is the very way that people perceive and gain pleasure from objects aesthetically. For Lipps it is the whole process whereby we intuit into the life of other objects. For Lee, aesthetic means that which is seen as a "shape" so that it manifests activity. Attributing activity to an object is the very stuff of empathy. Similarly in Munsterberg, to see things aesthetically would mean to see an object in isolation, cut off from everything else. The only way that can be done is if all of one's reactions (which are for Munsterberg physiological processes) are felt as occurring in the object. This is, of course, another description of aesthetic experience as empathy.

The popular view of empathy as a projection of one's emotions on an art work implies that the concept of empathy is one aspect, i.e. the emotional aspect of a more general aesthetic view. But the views of empathy discussed here are not only concerned with the attribution of emotions but in a sense all of those qualities, primary and what we have called "illusory," that go into the cognition of an aesthetic object.

But the question arises as to whether the aesthetic experience as empathy involves any faculty of judgment, an ability

to stand off and judge a work of art in discursive terms; For example, whether during the experience of empathy with a visual art object, one can ascertain if the colors, shapes and subject matter of a painting fit together well.

According to the empathists one can call something "beautiful" or "ugly" if it does or does not bring about pleasure in the observer. in Lee's case something is pleasant if it brings about associations to past activities that are pleasant; in Munsterberg's case it is pleasant if the observer grasps the harmony of the world by his harmony with the world; in Lipps', aesthetic pleasure is a function of the metaphysic. But in his view, as in Lee and Munsterberg, the evaluation of beauty or ugliness in an object does not come about by a voluntary conscious, intellectual judgment on the part of the observer. It is a result of unconscious processes occurring in the observer. Yet it is interesting to note that although the observer cannot distance himself to analyze the aesthetic object, he does not, according to any of the empathists, feel a <u>personal</u> identification and involvement with the object. One's feelings in reaction to an object become part of the object and are not identified with the observer's own life. The problem of the man who is jealous of his own wife getting so personally involved in <u>Othello</u> that he cannot enjoy the play would not occur because the observer's absorption is always in the object and not in himself. In fact, this isolation is the very condition for empathy in Munsterberg and the meaning of "shape" for Lee. Also Lipps strongly negates any idea of the observer being conscious of activity in his own body.

It is somewhat paradoxical then that according to these empathy theories, on the cognitive level the observer is so caught up in the object that he attributes his own state to the object and yet that there is a built-in distancing mechanism whereby the observer never takes his reactions to the picture as his own feelings to be acted upon. Rather these feelings are used to intensify the visual experience.

It should be noted that the above example from Othello is not altogether fitting although it portrays the problem of personal involvement which was being discussed. That is because these empathy theories apply basically to visual arts. Although Lee attempts at points to extend her theory to music, one is hard put to see how any of the empathy theories can be translated in toto to explain the aesthetic experience for the various forms of literature or music.

Lipps is the only one whose framework is general enough to subsume arts other than the visual ones. Participation in the life activity of an object certainly seems possible in the musical experience. Although there is the problem in the musical experience as to what exactly is the aesthetic object (the musical score, the orchestra, etc.), this does not affect Lipps for the activity need not be taking place in any identifiable object as long as the forces of life are being expressed. He even says that smell can be aesthetic if, for example, it rises from the ground on a spring day to indicate the life activities taking place.[1]

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[1]Ibid., Vol. I, p. 211.

Lee and Munsterberg on the other hand seem to be very much tied to visual perception. Their view of attribution of qualities implies an identifiable and defined object upon which to project the activity of the observer. This applies to the visual arts where there is a well-defined art object. Also since this attribution does not involve conscious intellectual effort, it cannot explain the more complex and various types of attribution that must take place in the literary arts. This limitation applies to Lipps as well because his concept of empathy involves an immediate feeling which he claims that the intellectual process precludes.[1]

Generally speaking then, although aspects of empathy theories might be tacked on here or there to explain other kinds of aesthetic experiences, they were created to explain visual aesthetic experience and the theories of Lee and Munsterberg and, to some extent, Lipps are most understandable in these terms.

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[1] Ibid., Vol. II, p. 11.

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ABSTRACT

The theories of empathy in the visual aesthetic experience as propounded by Theodor Lipps, Vernon Lee and Hugo Munsterberg attempt to explain cognition of qualities that do not correspond to any specific sensations due to an object, but are nevertheless attributed to the object just as the specific sensations (e.g. of red or blue) are attributed to it.

Pleasure felt as a result of experiencing the aesthetic object is not felt as occurring in the observer's body but as tied up with the object.

The empathists discussed have different explanations for the way that this attribution of what seem to be "illusory qualities" is achieved.

For Theodor Lipps empathy is a more complex process than it is for the other empathists. According to his view the observer, on one hand, participates in the life and activity of the object, and, on the other hand, attributes these "illusory" qualities to the object.

This paradox can be explained by the fact that underlying all objects, animate and inanimate, is a common mode of Being. The observer can only realize the Being in an external object by applying the categories of Being in his own experience to it. These are the "inner ideas" that go to comprise the self and which are applied to

an external object in order to perceive the deeper qualities of Being that exist in the object beneath the sensation level. By applying the internal ideas to the object, i.e. extending his self, the observer is thereby participating in the Being of the object at the same time as he is attributing to it qualities on the perceptive level.

This accounts for both the cognition of "illusory qualities" and the pleasure gained from empathy through the participation in the Being of the object.

Lipps begins the development of his idea of the activity of the self from the simplest case of experiencing the self through one's own activity. He then applies it to the activity of another human being, the representation of activity in an inanimate object and finally to the inanimate object which is not active but manifests emotion, force and unity by the observer applying these internal ideas to the object.

Vernon Lee develops a concept of empathy from an orientation which is basically psychological in contrast to the more metaphysical orientation of Lipps. Her basic concern is how the "psychological processes" in the observer can be perceived in the object to make the object appear alive and moving. This is accomplished by the principle of the "merging of the perceptive process" of the observer in the object of observation. That is, all the activities that occur in the observer during perception of an aesthetic object are attributed to the object being perceived. Just as the sensation of color is

attributed to the object being perceived, it is also true that the activities occurring in the observer during perception of an aesthetic object (since they are of a diffuse character and cannot be localized in the observer) are attributed to the aesthetic object.

The activities that go on in relation to an aesthetic object are not actual bodily activities (as Lee once felt). Rather they are the memories of past movement and activity, the ideas of which are attributed to the aesthetic object to give it the quality of life and activity.

Lee's aesthetic object is particularly suited to this attribution of movement because it is a "shape," a two-dimensional, geometric figure, rather than a "thing," an object with all types of associations that lead the mind away from the object itself. The formal geometrical character of the aesthetic object fits the concept of movement since the eye moves in perceiving the points of a geometrical figure and brings forth memories of past movement.

Activity seems to be for Lee the central characteristic of life and therefore any inanimate object that is seen as possessing the quality of movement expresses life and is an aesthetic object. If the activity expressed brings forth pleasant associations, it is beautiful. If these associations are unpleasant, it is ugly.

Hugo Munsterberg stands between the psychological and philosophical approaches to empathy.

Speaking philosophically he sees aesthetic perception as a necessary way of creating meaning in a chaotic universe of impressions.

He characterizes its manner of doing so as isolation: an object is appreciated for its own intrinsic worth; it is seen as disconnected from everything outside itself. Science connects objects while Art isolates them.

The meaning of the object is in the harmony and unity of the parts, and the observer, in order to realize this meaning, must come into harmony with the object. Nothing aside from the object must be in the observer's mind. It must not be seen as something to act upon, for then not the object, but some further end, is in mind.

The psychological reason for this taking place is that in perceiving the aesthetic object the observer does not localize his reactions in his own body as he does in reacting to a practical object in relation to which he must act--his arms or legs or head must move. But rather since the object alone fills his consciousness, the observer's reactions must become localized in the object so that it seems to move and bend and strain.

For Munsterberg the reactions of the observer are expressed in physiological terms. But since muscular tensions must result in some external movement and this is not possible in the aesthetic experience, Munsterberg explains what happens as a "tendency to action." The muscles whose activity in relation to a practical object would culminate in movement of limbs or head in the aesthetic case is inhibited by its antagonistic muscles. The observer does not act but experiences feelings of stress and strain which are localized in the aesthetic object.

According to Munsterberg the observer finds pleasure in repose in the object, in the very attribution of his own reactions in the object.

The intrinsic meaning of the aesthetic object, Munsterberg's philosophical goal, is the harmony of the whole which is experienced by the observer through his own psychological activities. The philosophical then is reduced to the psychological.

The empathists equate empathy with the aesthetic experience. Since judgments of beauty, according to them, are not intellectual, voluntary judgment, but the results of an unconscious psychological process, it can be deduced that intellectual judgment is not for the empathists part of the aesthetic process. Yet, according to the empathists, the observer does not identify personally with the aesthetic object and apply it to his own life. If anything the movement is outward. He applies his own life to the object.

The empathists have dealt basically with the visual experience and it is only with difficulty that their theories can be extended to other experiences.