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ART, REPRESENTATION AND EVALUATION

In our century, it has been attempted to discredit the established view that art is representative¹. This effort is mainly based upon those postimpressionistic movements of modern art, such as Abstract Impressionism, Cubism or Surrealism, in which the objects of our ordinary experience are distorted and presented in a new, the artistic, way. The value of art does not depend upon what is represented in it, i.e. its content, but it is determined solely by its form. To quote the words of one of the major apologists of this modern position, "the representative element in a work of art is always irrelevant. For to appreciate a work of art we need bring with us nothing from life, no knowledge of its ideas and affairs..."². Shall we, along these lines, abandon the old concept of the representative function of art and adopt the purely formalistic claim?

I would like, first of all, to make clear one point. It is agreed by adherents of the artistic formalism that the spectators (or the audience) and the artists, in appreciating or constructing respectively a work of art, do not recall its representative element. A painting, for instance, is justified as a work of art just by its abstract shapes, the relations and the quantities of its colours, in one word, by its form. In appreciating art, people do not actually bother to know if and how much a work of art is descriptive of some idea or natural entity, and how much it is not. However, such behavioristic claims are of secondary importance, as they do not concern the logical functioning of art. As a matter of fact, we do a lot of things in our daily life without being aware of their presuppositions. I do not in fact think if I will be living the next minute, when I say "I'll see you in a minute", although I cannot logically see you without being alive. The primary question, concerned with the logic of a universe of discourse (the ordinary, the moral, the artistic, the

1. Plato, *Republic*, tr. by B. Jowett in *The Dialogues of Plato* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1953), 595a-609a; Aristotle, *Poetics*, tr. by I. Bywater in W. D. Ross (ed.), *The Works of Aristotle* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1952), Vol. XI, 1447a-1448b; Plotinus, *The Enneades*, tr. by S. Mackenna (Pantheon Books, New York, 1956), I.6, V. 8 and St. Augustine, *De Musica*, tr. by W. F. Jackson Knight (The Ontological Institute, London, 1944), x. 29-xvii. 58, pp. 107-124.

2. Clive Bell, *Art* (Chatto and Windus, London, 1928), p. 25.



religious, etc.), is not how people behave with reference to it, but what they implicitly do in it. So far as the problem of the possibility of the artistic representation is concerned, the primary question is, whether the representative element consists of a logical feature of art, no matter if people explicitly verify it.

As this question is ambiguous, I would like to specify its meanings. It may be equivalent either (i) to the question "Can (logically) people talk of a work of art without the representative assumption?" or (ii) to the question "Is the representative element identical in meaning to evaluating a work of art?". The answer to both of these questions is negative.

(i) No term or proposition in any universe of discourse can be considered without being basically representative or, to put it in contemporary philosophical terminology, descriptive³. The word "red", for example, represents or describes a particular colour, which cannot be green, blue or any other pigment but this specific colour. The moral term "courageous" also represents a particular character, i.e. the character of a man who supports other people when they are beaten by stronger men. And so on with other terms. The representative or descriptive function of language implies certain rules of consistent use of terms, without which language becomes unintelligible and thus impossible. It is logically illegitimate on one occasion to call something "red" or a person "courageous" and on another occasion, under the same conditions, not to call so the same thing or person. It is necessary to change the representative or descriptive meaning of a term, in order to change legitimately its use. Along this train of thought, the use of artistic terms depends fundamentally upon their representative function. In that case, what do the protagonists of modern formalistic view of art do, by arguing that "the representative element in a work of art is always irrelevant", but undermine the foundations of the intelligibility of the artistic language?

(ii) However, the meaning of language is not exhausted to its representative or descriptive function. There are certain universes of discourse in which the terms and propositions are loaded, apart from their representative or descriptive meaning, with another kind of meaning, the evaluative. These two types of meaning differ logically. As the descriptive meaning of terms depends upon rules implicit in them, established by the agreement of people as to how they decided to use them, is a matter of analytic, whereas the evaluative meaning of terms is a matter of synthetic, as it is further determined by principles which each individual can freely adopt, without qualifying the

3. R. M. Hare, *Freedom and Reason* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1972), pp. 7-29.

meaning-rules of these terms⁴. Due to their logical differences, the descriptive and evaluative meaning can be accommodated within the same term without any contradiction. Value-words represent a particular idea or natural entity and at the same time imply an evaluation, in the sense that they give a moral, an aesthetic, a social etc. (it all depends upon the context —moral, aesthetic, social etc.— which the speaker refers to) instruction. To omit one of the two types of meaning, in considering the evaluative discourse, is logically fallacious. For if one eliminates evaluative discourse from its representative meaning, it becomes unintelligible and impossible, whereas if one effaces it from its evaluative meaning, it becomes equivalent to the purely descriptive language, and, in that case, one is open to the criticisms of committing the Naturalistic Fallacy⁵.

Unfortunately, adherents of the established view that art is representative did not appreciate the logical distinction of the two functions of the artistic universe of discourse. Namely, either they absorbed the evaluative meaning of art into its representative function or they considered the dissension between the two meanings of art in a metaphysical way upon ontological grounds. The former alternative has been followed by the realist, whereas the latter by the idealist viewers of art.

Naive realists in art, such as Plato⁶, argued that the function of art is nothing else but imitating natural world. The value of a work of art as such does not transcend its representative function, but it is limited to the ability of the artist to copy, like a camera, the world as accurately as possible. The naive realistic view of art can be summed up as: The most accurate imitation is the best work of art.

This position, being too extreme, has been widely disputed amongst aestheticians. There are numerous paradigms of works of art in which their value is obtained by sacrificing the accuracy of their representation. This is illustrated, for instance, by the paintings of El Greco, who is famous for his distortion in drawing. Accurate artistic representation provokes in us, as it has been remarked⁷, the pleasure of recognition and admiration of the artist's capacity to act as a camera in the world rather than providing us with aesthetic enjoyment. But, most importantly, accurate representation as criterion for the works of art is delusive. According to recent Psychology,

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 23 and 28-29.

5. G. E. Moore, *Principia Ethica* (Cambridge University Press, London, 1909), pp. 6-17.

6. Plato, *op. cit.*

7. Curt J. Ducasse, *The Subjectivity of Aesthetic Value* in John Hospers (ed.) *Introductory Readings in Aesthetics* (The Free Press, New York, 1969), pp. 301-302.



perception in general is not a passive process, in the sense that it is not simply a registration of sense data without any active contribution of the perceiver in this process. On the contrary, mind brings with it certain models which set the perceiver in such a perspective as to expect how things to look. People never just see things or persons, but they always put themselves in a mental set *t h r o u g h* which they expect to see them. It is true that we do not always see things as we expected to see them; the mental set of the perceiver in such cases is defeated by the object of perception. Yet, this does not imply complete abolishment of the perceiver's mental schemata, but it simply means the necessity of altering a mental schema by another one, i.e. to put the perceiver himself into a new set of expectations. Within the framework of the process of perception in general, the representative function of art should be considered⁸. The artistic imitation is determined not simply by the object imitated, but also by a system of schemata of the artist's mind, which are at any rate open to alteration by "trial and error". In that case, it is misleading to talk of accurate representation of the natural world in art. Although the artist's task is, according to naive realism, to copy nature as accurately as possible, they, nevertheless, as a matter of fact, do it so differently. The question "Which of these different artistic imitations is the accurate?" is meaningless, as the representative process depends fundamentally upon the mental models of the artists, i.e. their expectations of what they look for. If the mental sets in which the artists put themselves differ (and, in fact, they do⁹), so their artistic imitations of the world do. One cannot argue which of these artistic imitations is more accurate, as *a l l* of them, each within its imitator's mental set, may be equally accurate.

However, in the history of the philosophy of art, and particularly in the 18th century, the idea of accurate representation as the criterion for the work of art has been put aside. Naive realism, by which this criterion is provided, was replaced by a kind of soft realism, according to which the value of the works of art is determined by their *r e s e m b l a n c e* with what they represent. Resemblance allows a tolerable use of language. Unlike the accurate representation-criterion, which entails absolute and, of course, untenable correspondence between the works of art and objects represented, resemblance indicates a loose correspondence between them. It is possible that many disparities are

8. E. H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion* (Phaidon Press, London, 1962), pp. 4-7, 53-86 and 147-148.

9. The artists, as human beings, provided with different, strictly speaking, thoughts, experiences, feelings, etc., are, *ipsissima verba*, individuals and as such their attitude towards the world cannot be identical.

noticed between a work of art and the represented object (or objects), and yet to be held that they resemble. As Adam Smith put it, "it is by no means necessary that the imitating should resemble the imitated objects"¹⁰. Wittgenstein developed more the implication of Smith's remark by arguing that it is even possible to be no common feature at all amongst the members of a group of things which are taken to resemble¹¹. Discrediting the significance of the accurate representation for the work of art does not imply diminution of it, but, to the contrary, "the pleasure arising from imitation seems greater in proportion as this disparity is greater"¹².

What is important with adopting the soft realism, instead of naive realism, is that the difficulty implied by the accurate representation-criterion is obliterated on the basis of the resemblance-criterion. One and the same object may be represented variously in art. As these representations are constructed through the artists' mental sets, the object will have, more or less, been distorted. Yet, there is no absurdity in saying that, despite this distortion, works of art resemble with what they represent. Such a claim is valid as it is entailed by the logic of resemblance, which does not imply certain fixed features, but it consists of vague and overlapping likenesses which one realizes amongst different members of a group.

Nevertheless, the adherents of the theory of soft realism commit the same fallacy which naive realists did. Both of them try to define the value of art by analyzing its representative function. Such an analysis is at least barren. The evaluative meaning is logically different from the representative or descriptive meaning, so that the former cannot be inferred from the latter. There are numerous human productions which, although are claimed to represent accurately or resemble, more or less, loosely natural world, they are nevertheless not considered at all to be works of art. The value of art as such cannot be proven simply on the basis of representative criteria, such as those provided by either naive or soft realism in art, but one has to go beyond them, if one wants to find it.

This is exactly what apologists of artistic idealism did. Every work of art, they argue, should be considered in view of an ontological dualism. There is, according to them, a gulf or a discrepancy between the physical

10. Adam Smith, *Of the Nature of That Imitation Which Takes Place in What Are Called the Imitative Arts* in Karl Aschenbrenner and Arnold Isenberg (eds.), *Aesthetic Theories: Studies in the Philosophy of Art* (Prentice Hall, Inc. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1965), p. 241.

11. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, tr. by G. E. M. Anscombe (Blackwell, Oxford, 1974), p. 66 and 67.

12. A. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 229.

entity (sounds' combination, story telling, description on canvas or marble, etc.) and the work of art which is itself abstract or ideal. The physical entity in art actualizes this abstraction and functions as a vehicle of its presentation. A painting, a poem, a statue or a piece of music are each an abstraction actualized by physical means. This idealistic interpretation of art has a long history, as it appears in ancient times with Plotinus¹³ and it is still alive in our century supported by thinkers such as R. G. Collingwood¹⁴, S. Alexander¹⁵ and C. I. Lewis¹⁶.

The main problem with the artistic idealism refers to the way in which the two ontologically and intrinsically different aspects of art, the physical and the artistic, could be combined. Although Plato, speaking in general terms about the relation of the physical and the ideal world, had pointed to the insuperable difficulties of bridging them, Plotinus did not think and did not overcome the incoherence of the ontological dualism with which his idealistic view of art is interwoven¹⁷. Such efforts of bridging the physical and the ideal elements within the artistic universe of discourse have been taken up by thinkers of our century. Let me briefly refer, with regards to this point, to the attempts of two distinguished philosophers, viz. to Collingwood and Alexander.

Along the lines of artistic idealism, Collingwood argued¹⁸ that, when we speak of music, for instance, what we mean is on the one hand a collection of noises and on the other hand an ideal pattern, existing already complete and perfect within the artist's mind. If one wants to understand what is music, one has to pass beyond the former to the latter level of the artistic process. The movement from the physical to the ideal level is achieved by using *i m a g i n a t i o n*. As this function becomes the bridge between the two necessary factors of art, every work of art is possible upon imagination. Works of art are imaginary objects, for which their physical appearance is a mere vehicle.

Unfortunately, the use of the key-concept of Collingwood's argument, the imagination, is spurious. He, following the tradition of Hume¹⁹ and

13. Plotinus, *op .cit.*

14. R. G. Collingwood, *The Principles of Art* (Oxford University Press, Oxford-New York-London, 1974).

15. Samuel Alexander, *Philosophical and Literary Pieces* (Macmillan, London, 1939).

16. C. I. Lewis, *An Analysis of Knowledge and Valuation* (LaSalle, Ill.: The Open Court Publishing Co.(1946).

17. T. N. Pelegrinis, *The Concept of Beauty in Damascius* [in Greek (Athens, 1977)], pp. 60-62.

18. R. G. Collingwood, *op. cit.*, pp. 139-144.

19. David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. by L. A. Selby-Bigge (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1969), pp. 8-9.

Kant²⁰, speaks of it as if it was a particular function of mind. Unlike this view, G. Ryle remarked that “there is no special faculty of imagination, occupying itself single-mindedly in fancied viewings and hearings”²¹, but there is rather a variety of human activities that are imaginative. Most importantly, imagination-propositions are factual disclaimers. The objects to which imagination refers “do not exist anywhere, although they are imagined as existing”²². Thus, Collingwood’s claim that the works of art, considered as objects of imagination, exist, is nothing but a utopia. He would not certainly accept such a chimerical idea of art, but this is an implication indicated by analyzing the logic of the concept of imagination.

As to Alexander’s attempt to bridge the discrepancy in art between its physical actuality and its ideal significance, he introduces the concept of *i l l u s i o n*²³. When, for example, we look at Georges Seurat’s “A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of la Grande Jatte”, we all *i n f a c t* are presented with a flat surface of a thin strip of canvas, covered with variously coloured shapes, but it nevertheless *s e e m s* to us that these figures of pigment represent three dimensional beings (men, women and children) doing various things (walking, running, sitting, etc.), animals eating or moving around, boats sailing, etc. Confronted by a work of art, there is always a kind of illusion, due to which we are able to pass from the actual presentation of art to its ideal characters on the basis of which art acquires its significance as such.

However, as Paul Ziff²⁴ remarked, Alexander is guilty of using illegitimately the concept of illusion with respect to the artistic universe of discourse. Let us take as an example, used by Ziff, the case of a traveller crossing a desert who suddenly sees a lake before him, but as soon as he goes to plunge his hand into it, he in fact plunges his hand into hot sand. We say in that case that the man has been under illusion. In his situation three factors co-ordinate in particular, i.e. that (a) he was deceived, (b) he suddenly saw the lake, the object of his illusion and (c) he did not willfully create the illusory image of the lake, but this came out under his physical exhaustion and his psychological stress. Unlike, concerning Alexander’s use of “illusion” in art, none of these three logical features of this term is fulfilled. Indeed, when

20. Imm. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, tr. by Norman Kemp Smith (Macmillan, London, 1970), B127, A115, A121, A124, and A155; *Critique of Judgment*, tr. by J. H. Bernard (Hafner Press, New York, 1974), §§ 35 and 49, pp. 124 and 157.

21. Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of Mind* (Penguin Books, 1973), p. 244.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 232.

23. S. Alexander, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

24. Paul Ziff, *Art and the Object of Art* in W. Elton (ed.), *Aesthetics and Language* (Blackwell, Oxford, 1959), pp. 170-179.

one looks at a work of art to find out its ideal world, one achieves this by not being (physically or psychologically) constrained, but purposely with his free will. Nor does one grasp its ideal significance at the first glance, but goes through a, more or less, complicated and painful process. Finally, one is not supposed to be deceived in visualizing the ideal world of art, so that, after all this claimed illusory adventure, one will realize that one's appreciation of the work of art should be restricted to its physical actuality. In that case, Alexander uses the term "illusion" unintelligibly. However, he argues that "the artistic illusion is unlike ordinary perceptual illusion, for that illusion disappears to better acquaintance, is recognized to be an illusion. Whereas the illusion is of the essence of the work of art — ceases, therefore, to be illusion and makes the object significant"²⁵. But still this distinction provided by Alexander does not legitimize his use of the term "illusion" in art. For how could it be (logically) called "illusion" what Alexander calls by this term in the artistic universe of discourse, if artistic illusion does not include any of the logical features of the ordinary use of the term "illusion"? Thus, since what Alexander defines as "illusion" in art differs in meaning from the legitimate in general use of this term, his claim, that "the illusion is of the essence of the work of art", is unsound.

The grave difficulties in which the artistic idealists got involved are due mainly to the fact that they tried to interpret the, however rightly claimed, double function of art, the representative or descriptive and the evaluative, in metaphysical terms. They thought that beyond the representative appearance of art there is another, the ideal, world, which in fact consists of the essence of art. But as this ideal world cannot be proven either empirically or logically (neither one perceives it actually, nor is there any contradiction in denying the existence of the ideal world of art), it seems to be a mysterious reality, a ghost in art. This mystery creates puzzlements, such as mentioned above, which can be removed by eliminating the idea of the existence of such an ideal world in art. There is not, ontologically speaking, such a mysterious entity, lying behind the actual realization of art in a heterogenous way. To use the words of a 19th century thinker, Conrad Fiedler, "what art creates is no second world alongside the other world which has an existence without art; what art creates is the world made by and for the artistic consciousness... It is not that nature offers him (sc. the artist) something — which it offers as well to any other person; it is only that the artist knows how to use it differently"²⁶.

25. S. Alexander, *op. cit.* (my italics).

26. Conrad Fiedler, *On Judging Works of Visual Art*, tr. by Henry Schaefer-Simmern

I would like to comment on this, however important, remark that it should not be considered in the narrow way suggested by Fiedler, i.e. in respect only to the artist's consciousness; it applies also to any other, non artists, people, who are prepared to think of a work of art. They, equally with the artists, understand the term "work of art" differently from any descriptive term representing a physical object, such as, for instance, "table". The latter indicates simply a clear cut description of an object, in the sense that if one is asked "What is this?" one has to answer "This is a table", and this is the end of the story. But so far as a work of art, say Paul Cézanne's "The Bathers", is concerned, one, after giving its description (that it is an oil canvas representing a number of bathing women in such and such positions, tree trunks arching towards the center from the bottom to the top, in the distance a building amongst some trees, etc.), it is logical, unlike a purely descriptive object, to be asked moreover, as to whether one thinks of it to be a good or bad work. Implicitly or explicitly, everybody, in applying the term "work of art" to a description, has to decide upon its goodness or badness. It is inconceivable for a work of art to be neither good nor bad. We must of course be careful enough not to attribute the evaluative meaning of a particular work of art to the existence of some mysterious property lying behind the actual presentation of the work of art. Such an assumption goes back to the idealistic illusion. The evaluative bearing of a work of art is rather determined by a universal value-principle.

If one argues that one of Cézanne's *natures mortes*, for example, is a good painting, it is legitimate for one to be asked "why?", and one is obliged to give some reason justifying this claim. It is due to the characteristic of giving reasons that propositions of art (and in general of value) cannot be equated to propositions of sense of taste (e.g. sweetness, bitterness, etc.), as some thinkers, such as Thomas Reid²⁷, had wrongly suggested. The latter propositions are not supported by any reason going beyond them. If one says, for instance, "This is sweet.", it is illegitimate for one to be asked "Why?", and if, nevertheless, one will be asked, one would give a tautological answer, like "What do you mean 'why?'; it is just sweet.". Unlike, propositions of art are necessarily supported by reasons transcending them. One has to say something more about the value of the work of art, not simply that

and Fulmer Mood in Karl Aschenbrenner and Arnold Isenberg (eds.) *Aesthetics Theories: Studies in the Philosophy of Art*, p. 365 (my italics).

27. Thomas Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man* in Sir W. Hamilton (ed.), *Thomas Reid, Philosophical Works* (Georg Olms, Hildesheim), Vol. I, Essay VIII, Ch. 4, p. 499.

it is good or bad. As reasons why, for example, one of Cézanne's *natures mortes* is good, can be given a number of facts about its organization, the implicit geometrical structure of things which is fundamentally determined by the power of colour, the artist's intention to represent the true nature of things etc. Despite the variety of reasons, provided for the justification of the work or art, they are all commonly descriptive in meaning, as they explain what it is about the work or art. A work of art cannot be considered without some reference²⁸ to what it is about. To exclude any descriptive propriety from art is as if, as I said earlier, to make the artistic universe of discourse unintelligible.

However, descriptive reasons about works of art are not enough for their justification. If one provides such reasons as those given above (let us call them for convenience x_1, x_2, x_3, \dots), with reference to one of Cézanne's *natures mortes* one may be reasonably asked, why should this work of art be considered good upon x_1, x_2, x_3, \dots reasons²⁹. As there is not any implicit and necessary nexus between the goodness (or the badness) of the work of art and its descriptive reasons, in order for one to make x_1, x_2, x_3, \dots descriptions relevant to the justification of the value of the work of art, one has to assume the universal value-statement that every work of art depending upon x_1, x_2, x_3, \dots reasons is *pro tanto* good.

Concerning the adaption of artistic universalism, one point which needs consideration is the following: Works of art are not repeatable and imitable; on the contrary, they are considered to be unique pieces of a particular human activity. Nothing strange with this; it is simply the way we think and talk about art. The question is, whether the assumption of universal principle, in justifying a work of art, vanishes its uniqueness. The answer is negative. For there is not, generally speaking, any logical incompatibility between the concepts of universality and uniqueness³⁰. Something may be universal and at the same time unique without any contradiction or absurdity. Why should then the uniqueness of art be rejected in view of its universality?

28. I would like to remark once more here that this reference should not be considered in terms of accurate representation (this is, in fact, as I said, impossible), but the relation between the work of art and what it is about or what is represented in it is, more or less, loose; they may not even have any common feature and still be claimed a resemblance to be between them.

29. It is always possible, another person upon the descriptions x_1, x_2, x_3, \dots to think the same *nature morte* of Cézanne (which one for the same descriptive reasons considers to be good) as not good.

30. R. M. Hare, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-39.

In fact, universality and uniqueness in art converge to the same point, to uphold the authentic functioning of art. The universal value-statements of works of art are not arbitrarily chosen, but their choice is always determined by the descriptive reasons applying to the works of art. If the reasons, upon which depends fundamentally the formulation of a universal value-principle³¹, are, strictly speaking, applied to one particular work of art, as is actually the case, then this universal value-principle justifies only the work of art in question, and not some other work of art which is analysed in, more or less, different descriptive terms. The latter must be justified by another universal value-statement, which does not legitimize any other work of art described differently; and so on. As works of art are, in fact, described uniquely, it follows that each of them is determined by a distinct universal value-statement.

The question, however, is why should we complicate the matter, concerning the evaluative function of the work of art, by introducing, instead of particular value-statements, universal value-principles, since, as a matter of fact, each of them applies to no more than one work of art. Is not artistic universalism rejectable upon Occam's razor? I do not think so. To adopt universal value-statements for the justification of the works of art is not without significance. On the contrary, it is logically indispensable. For, in justifying a work of art, its descriptive reasons remain irrelevant to its estimation, unless a universal in form principle is issued. If, as I argued above, one claims that Van Gogh's "The Starry Night", for instance, is a good painting for such and such reasons (and this is a particular value-statement), it is still logical for one to be asked again, why Van Gogh's "The Starry Night", being supported by such and such reasons, must be considered as good. One cannot answer effectively this question, until one provides the universal value-statement that every work of art being determined by such and such reasons must be considered good. Thus, if uniqueness is an essential feature of works of art, universality, without being contradicting in meaning with artistic uniqueness, is a logically necessary factor of them.

31. Notice, I do not say that the universal value - principle is identical with reasons describing the work or art; such a claim would involve the Naturalistic Fallacy.

ΤΕΧΝΗ, ΑΝΑΠΑΡΑΣΤΑΣΗ ΚΑΙ ΑΞΙΟΛΟΓΗΣΗ

Περίληψη.

Ἡ ἄποψη ὅτι «τὸ ἀναπαραστατικὸ στοιχεῖο σ' ἓνα ἔργο τέχνης εἶναι πάντοτε ἄσχετο» δὲν μπορεῖ νὰ υἱοθετηθῇ, διότι ἐν τοιαύτῃ περιπτώσει

ὁ λόγος τῆς τέχνης χάνει κάθε νόημα. Ἐκτὸς ὅμως ἀπὸ τὴν ἀναπαραστατική λειτουργία τῶν ἔργων τέχνης, ὅ,τι ἐπίσης χαρακτηρίζει θεμελιωδῶς αὐτὰ εἶναι τὸ ἀξιολογικὸ τους νόημα. Οἱ δύο λειτουργίες τῆς τέχνης, ἡ ἀναπαραστατική καὶ ἡ ἀξιολογική, οἱ ὁποῖες δὲν ταυτίζονται κατὰ τὸ περιεχόμενό τους, δὲν πρέπει νὰ νοοῦνται ἐπὶ ὄντολογικοῦ ἐπιπέδου, δεδομένου ὅτι μία τέτοια μεταφυσικὴ ὑπόθεση δημιουργεῖ σοβαρὲς δυσκολίες. Ὁ συσχετισμὸς μεταξὺ τῶν δύο αὐτῶν νοημάτων τῆς τέχνης ἐπιτυγχάνεται μὲ τὴν προϋπόθεση μιᾶς καθολικῆς ἀξιολογικῆς ἀρχῆς. Ἡ ἄποψη γιὰ τὴν καθολικότητα στὴν τέχνη δὲν ἀντιφάσκει μὲ τὴν ἔννοια τῆς μοναδικότητας, ποὺ ἀναμφιβόλως χαρακτηρίζει τὰ ἔργα τέχνης. Ἀπεναντίας, καθολικότης καὶ μοναδικότης συγκλίνουν στὸ ἴδιο σημεῖο, τὴν κατανόηση τοῦ λόγου καὶ τῆς σημασίας τῆς τέχνης.

Ἀθῆναι

Θεοδόσιος Ν. Πελεgrίνης

