Chapter - I
INTRODUCTION

The nature, scope and limit of aesthetic judgement are not easy to state. The aesthetic judgement is not a solitary affair. There lies behind it large areas of presuppositions,social,historical and philosophical.Hence it will be convenient to state an overview of the issues that arise in philosophical aesthetics. A question that might occur to anyone who reflects on the arts is how such a thing should be possible at all. Here is something that sets human beings apart from the animal world. And here also is a fit subject for that sense of wonder which Aristotle spoke, as a motive for philosophical enquiry.

The activity of art is much older than philosophical reflection about the arts, and artistic objects and activities can be found in almost every society, including those in which there is no explicit concept of art.But since the beginning of Western Philosophy, the arts have been an important object of philosophical investigation. Both Plato and Aristotle were impressed by the importance of the arts, and their discussions remain as starting points for the philosophy of the arts today. Among other well-known philosophers who wrote about the arts were Acquinas, Kant Schopenhauer and Marx as well as twentieth - century writers such as Collingwood and Wittgenstein.

It is not unusual to begin by defining or trying to define the concept of art.But the quest for defination is not be regarded as a mere preliminary.The problem of definition is a difficult and central problem in the philosophy of the arts. The concept has had a long and complicated history. There has been much argument about what qualifies an object or a performance must have in order to qualify as art : wheather, for example, it must serve a useful purpose in order to do so,and what that purpose might be. The definition of art has often been connected with questions of value, and according to some writers,the question 'what is art ?' and 'what is good art?' are inseparable.

We may mention the main theories relating to the question how art and value are related. They are: (i) art is whatever provides aesthetic experience;(ii)

art is a vehicle for the expressions or communication of feeling; and (iii) works of art are imitations of nature or representations of reality. These theories can be regarded as providing definitions of art as well.

The question has become prominent whether both in aesthetics and elsewhere the quest for definitions is not altogether misguided. Some writers have argued that there is not, and could not be, a definition of art, and that this approach to the concept can only lead to distortions of it. This view has gained prominence since the appearance of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investgations* . There is, again, the more recent 'Institutional Theory' put forward by George Dickie. According to this,the traditional approaches and theories are indeed incapable of yeilding a definition,but another sort of definition is proposed; roughly, that 'work of art' means whatever has been put forward as such by a suitable person or institution. This has been, and continues to be an influential theory, not only in philosophical discussion but in the art world itself. A notable feature of it is that, unlike more and traditional approaches, it places no qualitative constraints on what is to be counted as art, leaving open the possibility of the most innovative creations to be admitted as work of art.

The question 'what is art' can be understood in ways other than the quest for definition. It may be about intrinsic qualities of art, such as beauty, though the question is not so much about defining art in terms of such qualities, but one might examine the qualities themselves. The most prominent example is that of beauty ; for whatever surprises the continuing history of art may have in store for us, it is likely that the traditional association of art with beauty will remain. There is the 'classic' view that beauty is an objective property, consisting in the balance and proportion of parts, and describable, according to some thinkers, in mathematical terms. Opposed to this one, 'subjectivist' views, according to which beauty is or is intended to be identified by, a feeling experienced by the viewer or listener.

In the early years of the twentieth - century 'formalist' critics as Fry and Bell treated *form* as the fundamental quality of art.Frank Sibley, more recently, has

drawn attention to the fact that the vocabulary actually used in discussing works of art is far wider than the traditional 'beauty','form' etc. It includes such terms as 'delicate' 'sombre', 'dynamic' and many others. The main questions here are; (i) in what sense, if any,these qualities are objects of perception; and (ii) what the logical relations are between them and the 'supporting' non-aesthetic qualities,such as 'pale-colours', 'curving lines',and so on.Can the former be deduced from the latter ?

The puzzling phenomenon of expressive qualities, such as 'sad' and 'plaintive' are applied to music. If a piece of music is described in these terms, are, we to think it is because the composer had these feelings when writing it ?

The question 'what is art' is taken at times as focussing on the mode of existence or ontology of works of art. In this context, it is important to notice distinctions between the arts. The distinction that is important for ontology is that between 'unique' arts such as painting, in which the works are particular physical objects, and arts such as poetry and music, where this is not so. A composition such as Beethoven's Fifth Symphony or a Raga can not be identified with a particular object or performance. In what sense does the work 'exist'? Philosophers have found it helpful to speak of such existence in terms of 'type' and 'token'. Such ontological questions are connected with important matters such as the authentic performance of works of music and drama. In the case of such works there are scores or texts. But these are necessarily 'incomplete' leaving room for a variety of possible interpretations, all of which might be claimed as authentic according to various criteria. A *rāga* may be renderd differently by different *gharānas* of Indian music . Can we, people of the present century, experience a work of music or drama in the same way as people of another age, say of the age of Tansen or Kalidas ? If not, what is the point of 'authentic' 'performance'?

The concept of aesthetic experience introduces us to one of the major theories of what the arts are essentially about. What after all, are the arts for ? To the question two main answers may be given, one social and the other personal. The

arts, it may be said, contribute or are capable of contributing, to the welfare of society, and should be promoted for that reason,in so far as they conform to it. But few would claim that social benefit is the main reason or justification for artistic activity. The personal answer on the other hand, will be in terms of an individuals' experience - the pleasure, delight, thrills, or whatever, that the experience when we listen to music,read a poem or contemplate a painting. It is clear that such experiences, however described,are prized very highly. For many people they are among the greatest pleasures of life, and much has been written and said about their importance. According to some thinkers aesthetic experience is uniquely marked art and extra-ordinary in its delight. Such remarks do not however, take us very far towards understanding *how* this kind of experience is uniquely marked art, or how it could serve to provide a theory of the arts in general.

The trouble is that when we think about the experience in question, we find them to be extremely various. This is so for two reasons, the first of which is personal : one person's reaction to a given works of art will be different from that of the other. Even if both are positive, they may describe their experiences in very different ways. This may even be true of the same individual at different times. The second reason is connected with the great variety of what we call 'works of art'? Is it really plausible to think that there is a particular kind of experience, to be called '*aesthetic*', that is common to all the different kinds of art? Even within a given <u>genre,</u> say the novel, we may be more impressed by the variety of the works and the corresponding readers' reaction, than by anything they have in common. No single account of aesthetic experience seems able to yeild a characteristic or group of characteristics that can serve as the basis of a definition of the experience.

Nevertheless a group of philosophers have tried to provide such characterizations, and their attempts are worth reviewing. Schopenhauer described the kind of absorption that we often experience in the contemplation of art, as well as of other aesthetic objects, such as a landscape. He said that we *lose* ourselves

entirely in this object. We forget our individuality, our will. In Schopenhauer's philosophy the will was a central importance and our 'contemplative' stance towards aesthetic object was to be characterized by a suspension of will.

The word 'contemplation' is different from 'disinterested', which is a negative term, and it plays the central role in Kant's theory. 'To be disinterested' describes the absence of the kind of interest that relates to one's own advantage or disadvantage. It is to be concerned with the object itself, not with how it relates to oneself. According to Kant it is by a feeling of delight that one comes to judge that something is beautiful. But this delight has to be distinguished from two other 'interested' kinds of delight, the first being a merely sensory agreeableness, such as a liking for mangoes, and the second, a delight in something that is recognized as morally good. 'Disinterested' is a negative concept and as such avoids the difficulties of positive characterizations of aesthetic experience. But there is more to Kant's account than the negative point, and attend to than latter.

A streak of formalism is there in Kant. But Clive Bell is commonly, and reasonably classified as a formalist. He can nonetheless be regarded as belonging to the aesthetic experience camp, in view of his appeal to a peculiar aesthetic emotion by means of which the essential quality of works of art, some quality common and peculiar to them all, was to be identified. This quality turns out to be what he called 'significant form' . Finally, Bell might also be classified under expression theories, since he held that what makes form significant is that it conveys an emotion felt by its creator.

Another account of the 'disinterested' kind is that of Edward Bullough's, with his notion of 'physical distance'. Here it is appropriate to make a distinction between an aesthetic *attitude* and an aesthetic *experience* . On this view, what is fundamental is our manner of viewing the object rather than the resulting experience. What is necessary, according to Bullough, is that, in a certain sense, we 'distance' ourselves from it. In a famous illustration he describes a fog at sea, which might well be regarded as terrifying by passangers on a ship; inviting us,

by means of an eloquent description, to see that the same people might be able to view the same fog as an object of great aesthetic enjoyment. This they could do by distancing themselves from the practical implications of the object.

A more recent exponent of aesthetic experience and aesthetic theories has been Monrae Beardsley. He attempts to provide a positive characterization of aesthetic experience, in the form of five criteria, and his modifications of these in response to criticism by George Dickie. Dickie has been a strong critic of this whole approach, describing the aesthetic attitude a myth. He is, one of the chief advocates of the institutional theory. His opposition to such writers as Bullough and Beardsley is not unconnected with this, nor is the fact that Beardsley has been a strong critic of the institutional theory. The point is that according to the Bullough or Beardsley approach, it must be possible to characterize art in terms of an appropriate experience or attitude, however difficult it may be to define these accurately. The point of the institutional theory, by contrast, is that allowance must be made for anything whatever to count as a work of art, provided only that it has been put forward as such by a suitable member of the art world. This presupposes nothing about the intrinsic qualities of the work, or about the experiences or attitudes of those who view or hear it.

The accounts just considered may be described as consumer - oriented . According to them, art is to be viewed from the perspective of a person viewing or hearing the work. One might say that such a theory be called the spectator's response theory. But there are also theories in which the central role is played by the person creating the work, and art is to be defined or characterised by reference to the creator's feelings rather than those of the consumer. This is not to say that the latter are always left out of account.Tolstoy's theory is one of transmission. He regarded art as comparable to language. By words a man transmits his thoughts to others, by art said Tolstoy, he transmits his feelings. The feelings, according to Tolstoy, must be of a certain kind; they must be (a) feelings that the artist himself has lived through, and (b) such as to promote the brotherhood of man; and the work itself must be understandable by simple people, so as to enable it to achieve this end.

The latter requirements take the theory beyond the scope of mere expression or transmission theories, into the realm of issues about the social and moral roles of art. In this respect Tolstoy was an important precursor of Marxist views about the arts. But they also raise questions, of a general kind, about the nature of definitions of art and indeed definitions in general.

The question of definition arises in the case of Collingwood, who stated explicitly that his intension was to define art in a way that harmonizes with common usage. Now according to Collingwood, works of art are expressions of emotion. But is this in accordance with common usage ? Perhaps many people would accept this statement as a definition, or partial definition of art.But would their actual usage of the term be in accordance with it ? What exactly does the statement mean and what does it entail ? Collingwood's account of the matter is rightly regarded as a classic of its kind.But when the implications are followed through, the results may strike us as strange, and far removed from ordinary ideas and common usage.

Collingwood's account differs in interesting ways from that of Tolstoy and other expressionist theories. According to Collingwood, the artist's emotion is of a very special kind; it is not a feeling to which one can give a ready name such as 'sentiment of human brotherhood'. Instead there is a burden of inchoate emotion the nature of which is unclear. Artists are motivated to rid themselves of this burden by making the emotion articulate to themselves, which they can do by creating a work of art suitable to it. These may be plausible ideas,but their impausible consequences may be so brought out as to show that they include the claims that the work of art exist essentially in the mind, and that, in Collingwood's words, 'every utterence and every gesture that each one of us makes is a work of art'.

A constant source of interest are the differences between the arts. A statement or definition that seems plausible for some of the arts may not seem so when we turn to others. In the case of literature, drama and representational

painting, a good deal of explaining can be done by reference to the events narrated, objects described or depicted. These play an important role, at least, in accounting for our interest in the relevant works. But this is not so in the case of music which, with a few exceptions, is non-conceptual and non-representational. Hence the expression theory has been especially prominent in the case of music.

But is music non-representational ? In this how it differs from language ? Some theoriets have claimed that music is a kind of language -a language of the emotions. Such a view is explained in Deryck Cooke's *The language of Music*, in which he presents, in great detail, a systematic correlation between emotion and musical patterns. Another account, in which music is compared with language,is that of Susanne Langer. Drawing on ideas and terminology from Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, she spoke of musical patterns as sharing formal properties' with human feelings of motion and rest. Music according to her, articulates forms which language can't set forth. A general difficulty with such theories concern the question of value. What, we may ask, would be the point of producing musical sounds, and other artistic works, if their only function was to express or symbolize somebody's feeling ? Even if the alleged correspondance between music and feelings were proved this would leave unexplained the value that we place on music, and the delight we experience in our encounters with works of art in general.

Such questions are readily answered if we appeal to intrinsic qualities of art, such as beauty, as opposed to facts about the artists feelings or other facts extrinsic to the work. Such theories of the latter kind could be called heteronomist, because they rely on something *other* than the work; and they are contrasted with Edward Hanslick's ideas in *The Beautiful in Music*. Hanslick rejected all theories of 'language of the emotion's' type, insisting that the value of music is to be found in its purely musical features. He maintained that in so far as a piece of music is representational, this diminishes its beauty. We are not to think of music, as we think of language, in terms of meaning;music pleases for its own sake,like an arabesque, a column or some spontenuous product of nature – a leaf or flower.

Hanslick may be represented as an opponent of the expression theory, but his autonomist stance can be seen in a wider context. In his emphasis on intrinsic properties he shares the purist conception of art maintained by Clive Bell; and his rejection of representationalism in music may be compared with Bell's denigration of representationalism in painting, and his insistance that aesthetic appreciation is of formal properties alone. Such autonomist or purist views are opposed, not only to the expression theory, but to any other views allowing a knowledge of the artist, or the circumstances in which a work was produced, to be relevant to its appreciation.

Of the various thories and ideas that have been held about art, one stands out for its quality, and its prevalance throughout the history of art. This is the idea for which the Greek *mimesis* is often used. According to mimetic views our interest in works of art, and the value we ascribe to them,are due to their ablility to represent or imitate reality. Such a view was expressed by Aristotle when he wrote that 'the poet is an imitator', just like a painter or any other image-maker (*Poetics*, 1460 b) . The idea that art is essentially mimetic was taken for granted by the Greeks and by many later writers up to the present day. It is also often expressed in ordinary talk about the arts. Thus a portrait may be praised as an excellent likeness or criticized for being not a bit like him; while the representation of offensive material in television drama is sometimes defended on the ground that 'that's how life really is'.

Plato's criticism of art was based on the assumption that art is mimetic . We may draw attention to two main aspects of the mimetic view. The first is that the arts serve to represent things, and the second that they are' beneficial by providing knowledge. It would be generally agreed that paintings are, or may be, representational. But how do paintings represent ? An answer that suggests itself is that the artist copies what he sees,thereby producing a likeness of the reality. This view has been criticised by Ernst Gombrich as involving 'the myth of the innocent eye' .The trouble is that what the artist sees depends on the cultural and conceptual equipment that he brings with him to the scene, and a similar point may be made

about the viewer. If the way in which a picture represents its object is not that of resemblance, then it must be one of convention. Nelson Goodman holds the conventionalist view. He has claimed that almost any picture may represent almost anything, and that pictorial representation is analogous to verbal description the former being no more dependent on resemblance with the object than the latter. This view of representational art invites comparison with views about non-representational arts such as music,including the idea that music is a language or symbolic system.

The question of truth and knowledge is another issue that is also quite vexing. An extreme view is that aesthetic experience has nothing to do with truth. But if it is accepted that truth has an important role in appreciation of literature, this does not entail that; as Aristotle thought, the latter can teach us anything,for the truths in question may be ones we already know and can then recognize in what we read in a novel. In any case, why should we expect a work of fiction, a product of the imagination to impart knowledge ? What, for example, can we expect to learn from a novel by Tagore or Sarat Chandra ?

Here it may be useful to distinguish between learning how (how certain motives can produce such and such results), and learning that (that such and such events occur or occured, etc.). What the novel teaches us is not the obvious fact that, for example, pride can be a force for evil; but how this can happen in a given set of circumstances, what we gain may be a deeper understanding rather than a knowledge of facts previously unknown.

What is the social and moral role of the arts ? The arts, according to Plato, belong to a class of luxeries, existing over and above the healthy society, the ideal state. He saw no need for a class of professional imitators in such a society. Such imitators were liable to be harmful because their motivation was of the wrong kind to entertain rather than to instruct.A poet for example,might present gods and heroes in a shameful on ridiculous light for the shake of better entertainment, and

there by set a bad example to the young. Another of Plato's criticism is that the poet may act out, say, a doctor's or a general's role without having a proper knowledge of these activities. These and other arguments of Plato may strike a modern reader as crude, and based on an excessively narrow conception of art. But they are readily applicable to some, at least,of today's art. Thus a modern novelist, or a T.V.script writer of drama may be motivated by a desire to capture an audience, rather than by a scrupulous pursuit of accuracy and truth, or by thoughts about the moral effects of a work. Nevertheless there as weaknesses in Plato's argument. He seems not to allow for the difference between our responses to a representation or imitation which we recognise as such; and the feelings that would be provoked in us by the real thing. Moreover, his arguments are applicable only to certain kinds of art, leaving aside the many artistic creations and activities which have no particular bearing on morals.

Plato's criticism of the arts is connected with his view about knowledge and moral knowledge, in particular.He holds that true knowledge is to be had by communion with eternal, immutable entities, the forms, and that the knowledge(so-called) that we gain through our senses is only of secondary validity. The best example of this is our knowledge of mathematical truths, which might be described as 'eternal' in contrast to empirical facts, knowledge of which may be gained from particular experience of the physical world. But Plato had a similar view about moral knowledge,ascribing the same eternal, non-empirical status to moral truths as to those of mathematics. But, one might argue, it is wrong to deny that we can give instruction in moral matters by empirical means. Experience, both of life and of literature, may not teach us moral truth, but it can enrich and deepen our understanding of moral situations, our sympathy for people different from ouselves.

In Tolstoy too there is the emphasis about the moral and social functions of art. Tolstoy's insistance on moral function is comparable with that of Plato, but he had a different idea about what that function should be. According to Tolstoy the function of true art is to unite people,to promote the brotherhood of man.This led him to stipulate, first, that art must have a wholesome content and, secondly,

that it must be accessible to everyone. We may pose two questions for this conception of art. The first is whether a work of art may not be essentially part of a local tradition, and none the worse than that, the second, whether it is right to evaluate works of art according to the fulfilment of a non-aesthetic purpose. In connection with the first question one may point out that even the stories of the Bible, regarded by Tolstoy as paradigms of good art - would be understood in different ways by people of different cultures and languages.

On the second question, concerning a 'non-aesthetic purpose' of art, we may say that aesthetic and political purpose may pull in opposite directions, with negative consequences for the quality of art. A similar difficulty arises for Marxist views of art.

A notable opponent of instrumentalist views of art was Oscar Wilde. But according to Wilde, the instrumentalist fallacy arises in connection with *mimesis*, the aim of being true to nature or true to life. Wilde denounces those who think that good art results from the mere imitation of reality. His rejection of *mimesis* might be compared with Hanslick's rejection of meanings in the case of music, and his insistance that music pleases for its own sake. These are all ways in which the intrinsic and peculiar qualities of art, and aesthetic experience, are defended against the imposition of extrinsic purpose or values, whatever they might be.

Instrumentalist views such as those of Plato and Tolstoy may be regarded as inadequate and perhaps philistine. But however much we may wish, contrary to them, to stress the intrinsic values of art, question about the effect of art on society can't be set aside. In recent times especially, there has been much concern about the capacity of works of art to give offence and cause harm. According to one authority, pornography is basically rapists' television. Another problem concerns the offence given to religious people by certain portrayals, in works of art. Hussain's painting of Saraswati caused much fury amongst some Hindu political interests.

So far the discussion has been mainly about the effects of art on society and morality. But other questions arise about the role of social force in the evaluation of art. Sociologist might argue that there is a problem about accepted evaluations of art because they are based to a large extent on the judgement of a small class of 'establishment' people, who are clearly unrepresentative of the population at large. This criticism can of course be questioned. On the other hand there are instances where low art and creations of popular culture are appropriated by bourgeois culture. Jazz music is an example. It was originally part of the life of an under priviledged class, but was taken up by the bourgeoisic so as to become part of their artistic culture. In the case of Hindustani music the dialecties between *Desi* and *Marga* modes of music may be taken as an example.

The moral and social effects of art, important as they may be, can not be sufficient for the evaluation of works of art. But how, by what other criteria, are they to be evaluated ? Do the main theories of art take us far towards answering these questions ? *Mimesis*, if it means a mere copying or imitation of things, leads to the absurd result a painting could be so life-like as to be mistaken for the real thing, and should be valued more highly than painting that are not intended to be mimetic. According to expression theories, the highest praise would go to works that are most effective in expressing their author's feelings. Finally the approach of aesthetic experience, being consumer - oriented, seems more relevant to the value that we place on art, but it tells us little about which, or whose, experiences are to be valued.

But what actually happens when we discuss the quality of a work of art ? Such discussions proceed largely by pointing art features *of the work*, aesthetic qualities. A work is praised because it is graceful or witty, or denigrated for being garish or sentimental. But what is the status and validity of such judgements ? Are they merely subjective ?

The subjectivist view is at odds with the fact that there is such a thing as aesthetic *reasoning*, with reasons being rechanged in support of particular

judgements. But what kind of reasoning is here involved ? Can we discuss the matter with reference to the traditional dichotomy of deductive and inductive reasoning ? Aesthetic reasoning one might say, is not deductive. We do not in a deductive sense 'prove' that a given work is witty or garish. Is there a role for inductive reasoning ? One argues that because this painting is by Rembrandt,it is likely to be good; this would be good inductive reasoning. But it would not give us what we want, which is to see for ourselves that the work is good, and *to see for ourselves* that the work is good, and to see for ourselves the aesthetic qualities that make it so.

It is possible to argue as well that aesthetic reasons are of a special kind, conforming neither to deductive nor to inductive models, but that this does not make them subjective. We may compare aesthetic statements with statements of colour ('this light is green') and show what reasons there are for regarding aesthetic statements, as well as those of colour, as objective. The simple dichotomy of objective and subjective remains questionable in aesthetics.

The evaluation of a work of art presupposes that we understand it in some sense, and this in term may mean that we have interpreted it correctly. The question of correct interpretation has been holly debated by writers on the arts, especially in connection with literary texts. To understand such a text we must know the language in which it is written; but is this sufficient for understanding it ? It is well known that a given text, say a poem or part of a poem, may lend itself to different interpretations. A good deal of critical discussion may be devoted to, not to evaluating the work, but to determining how it is to be understood. But should the question be 'what does it mean ?' Or 'what did the author mean ?' According to the view of Beardsley and Wimsalt in their famous paper 'The Intentional Fallacy', an author's intention is irrelevant in determing the meaning of his text. The meanings of words are not fixed by individuals, they belong to the words themselves, and knowledge of them is shared by those who speak the language. There is more to knowing the meaning of what someone has written or said than a mere knowledge of the words. We need also to know something of the context in which they are

written or said.This might tell us, for example, that the words were meant ironically and not in their normal sense . The case of *dhvani* in Indian aesthetic comes to mind in this connection. The poet may be consulted, and he might disagree. But does *his* meaning the meaning that matters ? Is it the one that matters for us, who read a poem today ? According Beardsley, a line may still be ironic, regardless of the author's intention. The latter being a fact about him, and not about the poem. This claim too is criticizable.

There is more to the intentional fallacy' issue than just intention.The arguments of Beardsley and Wimsalt take in all kinds of extraneous material - anything that is not found in the work itself. They are part of that purist stand of thought to which Bell gave expression when he wrote that to appreciate a work of art, we need bring with us nothing from life, no knowledge of its ideas and affairs, nothing but a sense of form and colour and a knowledge of three - dimentional - space; and also part of the argument, for a distinctive 'aesthetic experience', as postulated by Bell, Beardsley and others.

In this debate there are two extreme positions: one is that extraneous knowledge is never relevant to aesthetic appreciations; the other, that it always is. It may be doubted if either position is plausible.

Continental approaches such as structuralism suggests the view that the essential meaning of a work is to be found in the 'deep structure' of a literary work, others have suggested that there may be basic elements which are available for transformation by different authors and in different cultures. This is espically noticeable in folk - tales, where what is essentially the same story appears in many different guises.The French anthropologist Levi-Strauss used this method to analyze primitive myths, claiming that the same structural elements could be discerned in a number of them, in spite of their apparent diversity, and he showed how the relevant 'transformation' could be displayed formally in a diagram with quasi-mathematical preceision.

In this approach there is much emphasis on the systematic wholeness of a text. Its components have no value except within the system in question and are interdependent. Hence value was to be regarded as relative to a system. But there is no such thing as *intrinsic* value, which might be ascribed to the work (system) as a whole. Contrary to more traditional views, the task of the critic was not evaluation, but structural analysis. According to Levi-Strauss, such analysis is to be recomanded because of its power to reduce messages of a most disheartening complexity to a simple perspicuous pattern.

The value of this reduction of complexity is questioned and criticized by Jacques Derrida. According to him, it is an illusion to regard the elements or words of a text as having stable, determinate meanings. The meaning shift and change in an eternal play of mental associations, leading to the construction of puns and other word play. The constant possibility of shifting illustrates Derrida's point that meaning is never determinate and stable. The choice between *different* meanings is, so to speak, constantly being *deferred*. As regards the question of meaning, Derrida and his followers present the issue in a polarized from. The truth is that while meaning is not always stable, it is not always unstable either. If it were always unstable, must not the meaning of Derrida's text itself be regarded as indeterminate ?

Structuralism and deconstruction are hostile to, or at least silent on, the question of evaluation, unlike more traditional approaches. If we accept that works of art are to be analysed according to their deep structure or,on the other hand, that there are no stable meanings to be found in them, this gives us no guidance on the evaluation of particular works. The Marxist approach is quite the opposite. In it the concern with value is dominent, and the value in question is social and political. It is an approach of the same type as that of Plato and Tolstoy. Tolstoy's requirement, that art must be (a) 'realistic'and (b) accessible to the mass of ordinary people reappears in the writings of Marxists, who hold that art is to be judged and justified for its didactic benefits.

However, this is only one side of Marxist aesthetic, for many different views have been put forward by writers belonging to this radition. A particularly interesting difference is that between realism and anti-realism. A paradox of socialist realism is its tendency to lead to an art that is conservative and static; for if the appreciation of art is to be easily accessible to the majority of people, then the advantage will be with 'straightforward', rather than innovative, adventerous art. Such art may also be conservative in the sense of being in accordance with traditions existing in pre-revolutionary times. This would make it objectionable according to the Marxist 'reflection theory', where by the art of a given society reflects the nature of that society. From this theory it would follow that the art of a capitalist society, including traditional realistic styles, would be suitable for a capitalist and not a socialist state.

Other Marxist thinkers, however,have opposed realism,maintaining that, in various ways, non-traditional (revolutionary) art is more likely to promote the cause of improvement and education, perhaps by being more likely to make people think. A notable example is Bertolt Brecht, who recomended and practised an 'alienation effect',whereby the audience is actively prevented from treating the drama on the stage as reality, or identifying with the dramatic characters.

Such issues are usually discussed in relation to literature and the visual arts. Are they also applicable to music ? The term 'realism' is not readily applicable to music. Therefore we would like to reiterate what we remarked earlier that aesthetic judgement is a complex phenomenon, presupposing quite a number of theories and philosophical pursuations. We may now proceed to state and examine some of the more well known theories of aesthetic judgement in relation to its nature, scope and limit.

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