

EMOTIONS AS AESTHETIC PROPERTIES OF ABSOLUTE MUSIC

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Donostia, 2017

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For my father

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank so many people for helping and supporting me, that I am afraid I will never end. So, let me start before it is too late. First, to my thesis supervisor, Kepa Korta. Less than four years ago, he encouraged me to work on this PhD project. Knowing that my situation was not going to be ideal, but over the years, through many ups and downs, he has never given up on me, and has kept me positive and confident all the time. Without his support, when things seemed practically impossible, there is no way I could have done this. I will be grateful to him all my life.

Then I want to thank my ILCLI colleagues: Aida, for her smart suggestions and help; Yolanda, for her thorough work and for transmitting calm until the last minute; to Margarita, Zvonko, Eros, Joana, and with all my heart, to Josu and Paul. I have no words to describe what we lived in the final hours, days and nights. Their help has been fundamental for me. It is not an exaggeration to say that without them I would have missed the deadline. They kept me awake, worked with me and for me until the last minute, in such a disinterested way that I feel right now deeply moved.

I would also like to thank Javier Aguirre, who pushed me to continue with this research; to Josune, my friend who pushed me forward. To The Northagirres, my band, who have dealt with my stress and rushing around so many times.

Finally, to my family, to Xabier, my life companion, who has often paid the price for the damage. To my dear brother, Iñigo, and, very especially, to my mother and my father, for being there all my life.

o. Introduction

There be none of Beauty's daughters
 With a magic like thee;
 And like music on the waters
 Is thy sweet voice to me:
When, as if its sound were causing
 The charmèd ocean's pausing,
 The waves lie still and gleaming
And the lull's winds seem dreaming:

And the midnight moon is waving
 Her bright chain o'er the deep;
Whose breast is gently heaving,
 As an infant's asleep:
So the spirit bows before thee,
 To listen and adore thee;
 With a full but soft emotion,
Like the swell of Summer's ocean.¹

Beautiful verses have been dedicated to our special Goddess, those by Lord Byron and many others. I am talking about music, or as Greeks thought of it, the art of the Muses (Mousikē). Music seems to have been there, long before Ancient Greece, next to us, accompanying humans throughout the ages,

¹ Poem by Lord Byron, an ode written to music, whose title is in fact "For Music" (Byron 1919 [1901]: verse 598).

probably since the very beginning of humanity. It inspires poets, artists and simple listeners; it takes infinite forms and serves a great variety of purposes. The voice of music embraces the listener with its arms, its magic makes us bow before it, we let ourselves dream with it and as Byron says, it invades us with “a full but soft emotion” (Byron 1919 [1901]).

It is commonplace to describe music in emotive terms, to say that we hear melancholy in one song, or that another raises our spirits. It is also claimed that music is essentially emotional, that there is no good music devoid of emotion, that this quality makes music so special and that it is *there* where its magic resides. Probably it is not gratuitous to label music as “the language of emotions” (Cooke 1959), and regardless of whether it is a proper language or whether genuine emotions are involved in music, emotional properties are somehow detected in music and humans are often affected as a result of musical experiences.

The relation of music to the emotions is interesting to many disciplines and from different standpoints. Philosophers, musicologists, evolutionary and experimental psychologists, anthropologists, neuroscientists... all investigate and discuss the connection of music with the emotive life. My interest here focuses mainly in what music itself has to “tell” us about its relation to the affective realm, or broadly speaking, to what is taken as expressive and “emotional.” I point to what is *in music*, discover the aspects, elements or properties that make a piece of music melancholic or cheerful, or at least that lead it to be heard as such. In other words, define the nature of music, find an explanation for its expressiveness and also see how those properties prompt us to react in particular affective ways.

There is an aspect in music that I would also like to mention in this preface. There is something about music, that moves and entralls the susceptible listener with special power, fully and deeply, an intrinsic force that Kivy calls “the mystery of music” (2009: 205-213). I discuss whether music moves the listener, as a result of valuing and appreciating the work and its aesthetic

and formal features, or whether there is something else. So where does such a power reside? Is it to be found in its purely abstract features, or has music another sort of content that makes the aesthetic experience so intense?

In work, I delve into the relationship of music and emotions adopting a philosophical standpoint and grounding in the conceptual analysis proper of the analytic aesthetics tradition. I have also taken into consideration theories and research from the cognitive sciences on emotions and music, thinking that an interdisciplinary study may illuminate the issue, but the main focus has been from aesthetics. Of course, for the issue of how musical properties are related to its expressive power I have considered what music theory, and my personal experience as a musician, have to offer.

For this purpose, I focus on the problematic relation between music and expressive properties, and particularly between music and emotions. I try to clarify what is meant when we describe music in expressive terms, and also what the nature of the emotional experience of listeners is when appreciating a musical work.

First, I shall face the puzzle about how can music be expressive of emotion, being music, as it is, a non-sentient object, devoid of agency and consciousness. I want to clarify what is meant when we say that music expresses emotions, when we say that the second movement of Beethoven's *Eroica*² is mournful, that we can hear *it expressing* sorrow, affliction and so on. Could we really talk about music expressing emotions in a literal sense? If so, how could music do it? Were this the case, whose emotions? Where do they come from? If they are emotions, what are they about? Or are they not about anything?

Then, I look at the emotive properties of music from a broader perspective. Music is one of the fine arts, but has very special peculiarities. I am talking about music alone, *absolute music*. I would like to show that the expressive

² https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6l_bPmJifV4. Beethoven's Symphony No. 3, in E-flat major, op.55, also known as *Eroica*. The examples refers to the 2nd Movement, Adagio Assai in C minor.

features of music are part of its aesthetic properties. This task requires several terminological clarifications and probably also a short historical review in regard to aesthetics. The aim is to define what aesthetic properties are, to see whether expressive properties, and particularly emotive ones, can be regarded as aesthetic properties or whether they are something else.

The next step is to clarify the nature of those properties, to see if they have an ontological place in music, or on the contrary, are mere human constructions. I explain the relation of the primary elements of music to its expressive properties, developing a classification of possible types of aesthetic properties in artworks, and particularly in music.

Once that is done, it's time to go into the detail, and enter into the musical machinery, its dimensions and the aspects that constitute and grant music such power. Moving across that terrain, we will need also to explain why and how it is that we recognize expressive and particularly emotive properties in music. With this aim, I propose a resemblance account of music inspired by Peter Kivy and Stephen Davies.

Finally, I also explore which kinds of emotion, quasi-emotions, moods or other affective reactions listeners experience with a piece of music, at least if we consider that they experience anything at all. Listening to the *Eroica* makes us sad and gloomy, makes us cry, lets our mind wander in past mournful experiences, drives us to despair, or fills us with awe. For the present I am not so much interested in *any* kind of affective responses, but in those that have to do with the properties that music *itself* presents.

There are many things that need to be considered in order to achieve those goals. We should define our concept of emotion and its constituents first. In the case of music, especially in pure or absolute music,³ this explanation becomes problematic, given that there is no obvious content at which a music-work points, i.e., there is apparently nothing to be sad, angry or joyful about. At first

³ I clarify the concept of absolute or pure music in section 0.1.

sight there is no one, nothing in the *Eroica* for whom I may feel sad, nor nothing for which I might feel despair. How could *music* be the object of my emotion then? How could it be its cause? Why do we react to music emotionally if it does not have obvious implications for our lives?

Be that as it may, our experience makes it difficult to deny that music moves us in one way or other. And this is precisely what I intend to clarify at the end of this work, where its power to move us resides, and what we precisely mean when we talk about “being moved” by it?

Philosophy of music is the discipline that studies the nature of music and our experience of it (Kania 2014). Much of the philosophical questions regarding music concern aesthetics, given that music has been considered, since the eighteenth century, as one of the fine arts, and it is an extended practice among people (composers, performers, or listeners). Issues concerning ontology and music cognition, are studied together with the relation of music to the emotions, in the philosophy of music. As I have said, this research work focuses on the latter.

As with many philosophical issues, the early philosophical discussions on music can be found to be in conceptual confusion. In order to avoid such confusions, I will try first to clarify the notion of “music” as an artistic discipline that deserves aesthetic interest. Afterwards we will see what is understood by the term “emotion,” and develop my notion of it.

Music is commonly defined as *the art* of organized sound, differing with other sound structures, that even if organized, cannot be properly taken as music. An influential definition of music was given by Hanslick, claiming that “music is forms put into motion through sounds” (Hanslick 1986 [1891]: 28). We can think of examples of sounds that follow patterns or organized structures, heard in our daily life, but which could hardly be considered proper music. Speeches, the tolling of church bells, the roaring of car engines or the sound of chirping birds may be taken as examples of organized sound. We could even hear them “as if” they were music and “as if they had” some formal properties of

the musical sort (melody, rhythm...). But I would not take them as music, at least if they were not created *qua art* or with a musical purpose.⁴ We could add that we also hear musical sounds as pitched, occupying a place in the scale (Davies 2003, Scruton 1997). However, it seems to me that this definition does not cover, for instance, works of percussion or electronic musical loops that lack pitch or tone as an element. A more promising definition of music has been offered by Levinson, claiming that its sounds must be organized,

(...) for the purpose of enriching or intensifying experience through active engagement (e.g. listening, dancing or performing) with the sounds regarded primarily, or in significant measure, as sounds. (Levinson 1990: 273)

A test-case for the concept of music is John Cage's 4,33,⁵ "silent" where the musical "sounds" as commonly understood, have no pitch, no rhythm, no harmony, no structure. So, is it nothing? Most musicologists take "the content of the piece to be the sounds that occur during the performance, rather than the silence due to the performer's inaction" (Kania 2014 : 3), an idea however discussable, which poses a serious question in regards to the ontology of music.⁶

In this dissertation I avoid controversial examples (of the type of Cage's work), and I limit to what is taken paradigmatically as music, i.e., structured sound works created as art, composed *qua music*, and constituted by purely musical elements, such as harmony, pitched tone and rhythm. I will also narrow

⁴ Notice that much music has been composed with the intention of emulating such sound patterns. Examples can be found in Honegger's *Pacific 231*, said to represent steam engines, Vivaldi's *Spring* the singing of birds, or the passage on which Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*, 5th movement emulates the bells of death.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xp8ocHYVh2Q> (Honegger's *Pacific231*)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cao6WyF-6is> (Berlioz, *Symphonie Fantastique*, 5th movement)

⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zY7UK-6aaNA>. (John Cage's 4,33)

⁶ For further information and reflection on the subject, I recommend watching this controversial video by William Dodds of Manchester University: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WTCVnKROlos>

the scope to absolute music, this will be the main character of this story, music without text, lyrics or program, also called pure music, instrumental music, or “music alone” (Kivy 1990). In other words, music without the accompaniment of non-musical components. The main reason for this, that is confining myself to pure music, is that it allows a better understanding of what music has to “tell” by itself, without attributing or transferring this content to narrative components of any sort. That being so, I think we can examine the questions and evaluate the possible answers about music and emotions more carefully, and avoid extra-musical contamination.

Regarding emotions, what I have found is that the term is used to cover too broad a variety of phenomena and that there is no agreement about the essential element of an emotional process. Often “emotion” is used to refer to states charged with feeling that, as far as I can see, don’t fulfill the conditions of a full-blooded emotional episode. Besides, theories of emotions can be found back in Plato and Aristotle, and since then, philosophers’ and psychologists’ explanations have fluctuated throughout history, sometimes stressing their feeling components, other times claiming that emotions are essentially cognitive processes. Even though I have read up on theories of emotions and actual discussions on the topic, I don’t intend to expose them here thoroughly, but just to the extent that some ideas may help to illuminate our issue.

Thus, the very definition of “emotion” depends on the theory of emotion adopted. In Chapter 1 I clarify concepts related to that term, concepts that occupy what I call “the affective realm.” Throughout the dissertation, I argue that the idea of “emotion” in its narrow sense involves much more than feeling and its corresponding somatic or physiological component. I claim that there is no emotion without cognition, but neither emotion without feeling. I take emotions as mental states generated as responses to certain events that have significance to our well-being. They involve feeling components, affect bodily changes, have physiological impact, affect our behavior (have motivational force) and are triggered when an external object is appraised or judged in a specific way relevant for our well-being.

I have also pointed to the ideas of the “attentive listener,” “ideal listener” or the “appropriate listening experience.” Attentive listeners do not need profound knowledge in music theory, neither to be experts in that particular style. But there are still some minimal constraints: the “hearing” must be directed at the work, attention focused as much as possible, and the listener should be minimally familiarized with that specific sort of music for a proper understanding, appreciation and aesthetic enjoyment of it.

I consider it important to delimit the discussion of emotions to such a prototype listener, whose perception, attention and cognitive involvement is focused *on music*. Conclusions based on passive or disinterested attitudes towards music, would not be relevant for this research (although this could be interesting from a psychological standpoint). Obviously there are many modes of listening to music, and I don’t intend to defend some above others. But for the present purpose, I will avoid the type of hearing or enjoying of music that somehow distances the listener from what is a proper musical perception. Some music may push us to dance, or help us to create a tranquil and enveloping atmosphere, and that’s good and licit. But as soon as we forget about listening to music, our attitude is not useful for this discussion anymore.

In any case, I claim that an aesthetic listening experience (at the time of listening) does not need to be devoid of affection, and that identifying the expressive properties in the work and getting carried away for its beauty, may even help in a better understanding of the music-work.

Outline

The structure of my work is the following one, In Chapter 1, I present the puzzle of music expressiveness. I critically analyze different accounts to pave the way for my proposal. In Chapter 2, I expose a cognitivist account of music expressiveness. I argue that emotions in music are not felt, but are perceptual properties of it, and that music has the power to exhibit the appearance of emotions. Chapter 3 focuses on aesthetic properties of art-works, and, departing from Sibley’s account on “aesthetic concepts,” I propose a taxonomy

of second-level aesthetic properties of art in general. I also show the place that expressive properties occupy among them. Chapter 4, brings us back to music and to show how the classification of aesthetic properties applies to music. I use various examples to illustrate the classification and its scope. In Chapter 5, I address the issue of *how is* that music is able to include those expressive properties in it, particularly emotive properties. The core issue of this chapter then, is to explain how do emotions “get into” absolute music.” In Chapter 6, I present the Radford Paradox of fiction as an introduction of the issue of emotions in the listener. I present two ways in which music can induce emotive or more generally affective responses in the listener. As usual, the seventh and last Chapter is devoted to the conclusions and the plans for future research.

Chapter 1

1. The puzzle of expressiveness in music

The emotional expressiveness of music has been, since Hanslick's formalist account, a much discussed issue in the aesthetics of music. Against his skeptical ideas, there is a growing consensus that music is expressive of human emotions, and that music is often heard as expressive of emotions by listeners. We say that the second movement of Beethoven's *Eroica*⁷ is mournful, that Chopin's Etude Op. 10 No.12 expresses anger, or that Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony sounds depressing. However, there is no such agreement about what is meant by "expression of emotions", nor in explanations of how music can be expressive of emotions. How can we make sense of there being emotions in music, given that it is a non-sentient object, devoid of agency and consciousness? Can we really talk about being emotions in music in a literal sense? If this were the case, which sort of emotions, or whose emotions?

1.1. Emotions in ordinary life and emotions in music

Describing music in emotive terms puts us into a quandary. Emotions, in a broad sense, are mental states attributed to sentient agents and commonly involve feelings, physiological reactions, cognitive processes and behavioral changes. The significance of these elements will depend on the account of

⁷ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6l_bPmJifV4. Beethoven's Symphony No. 3, in E-flat major, op. 55, also known as *Eroica*. The examples refer to the 2nd Movement, Adagio Assai in C minor. It is a classic example in musical aesthetics literature.

emotions we adopt. But in any case, it seems pretty obvious that emotions are not part of music in the same way they are part of human beings. Music is not melancholic or jolly in the way a person might be. Music does not feel, think or react to any stimuli.

However, we describe music in expressive terms and in fact there is a significant consensus in the attributions of emotion we make to different music passages, at least about *some* characteristic emotional features. There will be little doubt, I guess, with describing Albinoni's Adagio as "sad," or the main theme of Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor as expressive of "fury" or "anger." But applying predicates like "proud," "desperate" or "tender" to instrumental music pieces may bring more disagreement and make us wonder whether such terms point at real properties of the work, or denote our personal experience of it, or are somehow influenced by external factors (say, the context of the composition, canon, et cetera). Are all emotive descriptions of music events merely figurative, or is it possible to make sense of them (at least some of them) in any other way? Can emotive properties be regarded as part of the purely musical content?

In this chapter I will clarify what is understood by "emotion." In later chapters I will show that "expression of emotion" when attributed to music is understood in different ways, and only one of these different senses of "expression" has a place in the context of purely musical pieces and explains the expressiveness of music. Finally, I will discuss which account explains best how music is expressive of emotions.

1.2. What are emotions?

The term "emotion" is used as an umbrella term that covers what I will call "fully-fledged emotions" such as sadness, fear, anger or joy (emotions in its narrow sense), and moods such as depression, anxiety, melancholy or

nervousness, and feelings.⁸ The aim of this section is not to survey in depth different accounts of emotions, but to clarify a few concepts and sketch a hybrid theory of emotions that I think answers best to the diversity of the emotional phenomena, and sheds light on the relation between emotions and music.⁹

Contemporary philosophy and psychology hold quite generally that emotions are intentional, evaluative and related to events in the world. However, there is divergence about *what* emotions are. Thoughts, perception, memory, action tendencies, behavioral patterns, feelings, body changes... are all elements of affective processes. But it is contentious whether any of them is more fundamental than the rest.

At one extreme of the spectrum of theories of emotion stand cognitive theories, emphasizing the role of thoughts and propositional attitudes and downplaying that of bodily processes (Lyons 1980). Cognitive theories assign emotions an evaluative judgment (a thought content) and it is such a judgment about the object that is the *import*¹⁰ of emotion (the judgment about good fortune as the import of joy, for example). This view, that traces back to classical times,¹¹ is probably the dominant account of emotions in contemporary philosophy.

At the other extreme, we find feeling theories of emotions, which make bodily reactions and the feeling of such changes, essential to emotions (James 1884, on the somatic feeling account; Damasio 1997, Prinz 2004, as revisited versions of feeling theory of emotion).

⁸ Prinz (2004) refers to emotions, moods, motivations, sentiments and valence bodily states as the main affective constructs. Ben-Zé'ev distinguishes emotions, sentiments, moods, affective traits, and affective disorders. For present purposes, I think it is sufficient if I focus on emotions and moods. In any case for further reading, see Aaron Ben-Zé'ev (2000).

⁹ For deeper immersion in theories of emotion see Lazarus (1999), Prinz (2004), Deigh 2009.

¹⁰ With *import* is meant the core content of emotion.

¹¹ The Stoics and Aristotle wrote about those issues.

Of course, there are many accounts in between. Perceptual theories of emotions are one example (De Sousa 1987, Nussbaum 2002), and answer some of the objections made to standard cognitive accounts.¹² Appraisal theories, such as the one proposed by Lazarus (1991), Lazarus & Smith (2000 [1990]) or Arnold (1960) might offer the key to understanding why emotions differ between individuals. In general terms, they claim that evaluations, or better, appraisals of the situation are essential to the definition of particular emotions, and propose that different patterns of appraisals (according to different dimensions) give rise to particular emotions.¹³

Feelings are defined as “the subjective experience of emotions and moods” by Juslin & Sloboda (2010: 10).¹⁴ We say that “we feel sad,” or that “we feel depressed,” to denote our particular experience with regard to an emotional process. Feelings are experienced due to physiological changes that can be identified (e.g. heartbeat racing, hard breathing, gut contraction ...), body changes that the subject perceives internally (Damasio 2006 [1994]: 143). It could be said that feelings involve not only a subjective aspect, but also a physical-objective response. In any case, feelings are basic components of both emotions and moods, but not *all* feelings are components in emotions (Damasio 2006 [1994]: 150-151). For example, feeling physically tired, calm or excited does not require an emotional import; in

¹² A typical objection to cognitive theories of emotions is illustrated with the example of “fear of falling”. Fear may be felt in front of a precipice even if one is sure she won’t fall. Perceptual theories answer that it is not the belief about falling but the perception of danger in falling that causes fear. This would also explain why we experience emotions in fiction.

¹³ According to Lazarus & Smith (2000 [(1990)]) appraisals can be understood as “evaluations of what one’s relationship to the environment implies for personal well-being.” Magda Arnold (1960) distinguishes three dimensions to each emotion; Lazarus (...) offers a more elaborated six-dimensional account. For example, anger is defined in terms of the following aspects: goal relevance (it is relevant), goal congruence (it is in-congruent), type of ego-involvement (self-esteem for example), blame or credit (someone is to blame), coping potential (attack is viable) and future expectancy (things will be expected to change by attack). That’s why more or less satisfactorily different combinations of values can define, according to Lazarus, different emotions.

¹⁴ The first entries of New Oxford American Dictionary (2005) defines “feeling” as “an emotional state or reaction,” “emotional responses or tendencies to respond.”

contrast, when an emotion like fear is experienced, something else beyond the physical reaction is involved, there is something to be fearful of and the shortness of breath is induced by the perception and probably evaluation of such an object.

So, we said that emotional states (in a broad sense) are characteristically accompanied by physiological changes or body reactions. Fear comes usually together with a quickened pulse, a shortness of breath, trembling lips or goose-bumps; rage causes flushing of the face, clenching of the teeth and so on. Sometimes symptoms are more easily recognizable than others, which makes the category of emotions so diverse.¹⁵ I will argue in Chapter 2 that this is one of the reasons why not just any emotion can be depicted by music.

The boundary between moods and emotions is not clear. It is not even clear whether they are of a distinct class or not.¹⁶ They are in fact often used interchangeably to refer to thematically parallel moods and emotions (gloomy/melancholy-sadness, anxiousness-fear, ...). This extends also to the predicates we ascribe to musical passages. We may describe Chopin's C sharp minor Nocturne as having a melancholic (mood) touch, or we could refer to it as a sad (emotion) music piece, and probably both descriptions match our perception of it. So, it seems moods and emotions have much in common. Both have a feeling component that involves physiological changes and are characteristically linked to outward physio-gnomic and bodily expression. They may also be induced by the same particular object; for example, the death of a friend as the cause of sadness, as well as what triggers a depressive mood in the long term.

Let's look now at some differences. Moods are generally defined as low intensity subjective feeling states that are relatively long-lasting. In contrast,

¹⁵ Different types of emotions and their relation with music expressiveness are reviewed in section 2.6.

¹⁶ Prinz (2004: 182-190) adopts this view, and offers a very interesting discussion on the issue.

emotions normally have a shorter life but are felt with more intensity. An outburst of anger will probably be the result of a particular emotional experience, a short-lasting but intense emotive reaction; whereas a depressing mood can be milder but endure much longer and with everlasting pain (notice that a mood state may be originated by a previously felt emotion). Similarly, moods respond or apply to global conditions whereas emotions involve focusing attention on a subset of the environmental input, on a specific event, a stimulus, a story, something that implies a significant change for our well-being.

In standard cases emotions point to specific situations, are about something or have an “aboutness.” You are angry, proud or fearful about something. In contrast, moods may not have a clear object pointed at; we are often trapped by them in such a way that the cause that initially triggered this affective state may be blurred. For instance, you may find yourself feeling gloomy or anxious for several days or months without being able to say what you are gloomy about. However, I don’t think this means that moods lack intentionality. Indeed, I don’t think emotions and moods differ in that some are intentional states and the others unintentional, but in that the cause of an emotion, in contrast to moods, is usually a particular event. Thus, moods are also intentional states, even if the objects they correspond to are not particulars. I draw on a distinction made by Jesse Prinz in support of this view.

According to Prinz (2004), intentionality does not lie in the particular object that “caused” the emotion, in what triggered that emotion (say, sadness at the death of a family member), but in the formal-relational object that such emotion *represents* (“loss of something valued” in the case of sadness). In other words, intentionality lies in *the property* in virtue of which an event elicits an emotion.¹⁷ If we follow that, moods such as anxious or melancholic states,

¹⁷ Prinz (2004: 62-63), invoking Kenny’s (1963) idea, distinguishes between the event that causes an emotion (the particular object), and what the emotion represents (the formal object). The latter is the relational property, the property in virtue of which an event elicits an emotion, a property that represents an organism-environmental relation. For example, sadness represents a loss, and the death of a child is the cause of sadness, in

represent also those sorts of property, an uncertain threat in the case of anxiety or a low-spirited feeling of loss in the latter. I think here resides the most important difference between emotions and moods. Melancholy (mood) and sadness (fully-fledged emotion) may share the same formal property (loss of something valued), but in melancholy as a mood, it may be difficult to find the particular object that triggered such affective state. Thus, both, emotions and moods involve intentionality, the difference is that the cause of an emotion, in contrast to that of moods, is usually a particular event.

Finally, fully-fledged emotional processes involve cognition to some degree and require evaluative appraisals of external events. In contrast, moods might influence cognitive capacities (Carroll 2003), *but* may not be a result of cognition or require a specific appraisal to set them off.

Summarizing, I take emotions as feeling-charged mental states directed towards particular objects. Focused on what is important to the subject as a result of an appraisal for her well-being, they represent characteristic relational properties.¹⁸ Moods are also feeling-charged mental states, but refer to things or situations quite generally, and are less attached to and focused on something in particular.

Therefore, I assume an “hybrid” theory of emotions. I support the idea that feelings and bodily reactions normally involved with them are basic in emotional processes. But, at the same time, I think reducing what an emotion *is* to our experience of changes in the body oversimplifies the phenomena. For an emotional episode to occur, a situation, real or fictional, external or internal,

virtue of being a loss. Being a loss, in fact, does not depend on being represented as a loss. I may not represent the death as a loss given that I don't care about that child, and won't respond emotionally. But it is still a loss. So, sadness is not intentional because it is directed at the death of a child, rather because it represents loss (a formal-relational element).

¹⁸ Lazarus (1991) offers a “dimensional appraisal theory” of emotions, which could be regarded as a particular type of cognitive theory of emotions. In his account emotions are intentionally related to what he calls “core relational themes”, and each emotion is an evaluation of how the relationship of the subject and the environment affects to her self-being.

that somehow affects the subject, needs to be perceived and appraised. The degree of cognitive involvement in such a process will depend on the particular emotion and its complexity. But in any case, I cannot see how they can be reduced to a single aspect, given the diversity of emotional episodes.

The key to understanding the plurality of the category of emotions is the extent to which elements such as feelings, thoughts, evaluations, judgments, behavioral changes, and so on are involved in different emotions. And, as we shall see, this is also what will prove key in the account of the relationship between emotions and music.

1.3. Emotions and music

Having seen what emotions and the components implied in affective processes are, asserting that emotions are literally part of music sounds preposterous. Neither music-works nor instances or performances of music-works, are psychological states, that is, human mental states. However, we describe music as sad, joyful or fearful. It has been argued that music is the genuine language of the emotions; a language that conveys emotions in a better way than any other artistic form. I won't however defend that view, as I don't take music to have the necessary properties for being a language.¹⁹ My goal is to explore what it is about music that makes people of all ages and places identify emotional aspects in it.

For non-specialists, describing a musical event in terms of technical-musical terminology is quite complicated. But a pleasurable musical experience does not necessarily require expertise in music criticism (or practice). We may enjoy and even understand what is "happening" in a music-work without detecting the specific musical properties that it contains. I would say, at least, that it is perfectly right to describe music using predicates from our everyday contexts. We say we detect tension and relaxation in music, balance

¹⁹ For an interesting discussion about why music is not a language, see Kivy 2004.

and disorder, coherence and incoherence, delicacy and heaviness, melancholy and joy. It may be argued that we are inclined to “animate” natural and physical objects, that we detect tranquility or delicacy in a music piece just as we see faces and human body shapes in clouds or trees, or just how we read an angry face in a simple emoticon. It seems to me, however, that there is more substantial “ground” for the expressive attributions we make to music-works, than there is for the humanizing of elements of the natural environment. To find this “ground” is one of the aims of this work.

There are several answers to the question about the relation between emotions and music. One is to argue that when we say something like “this music is sad,” we don’t need to understand it as a literal possession of sadness, but rather as a metaphorical one.²⁰ Another one is to simply deny any direct relationship between music and emotions, in other words to hold that there is no place for emotions in music. That’s more or less the answer given by pure formalists.

But there are several ways to make room for literalness in the statement “this music is sad.” We may argue that such emotions are the expression of emotions by a subject, the author-composer, or also that they are the expression of an imagined character that inhabits the music.

²⁰ Versions of this view of emotions in artwork are those presented by Susanne Langer (1957) and Nelson Goodman (1968). It is not my idea to analyze them in length, but it is helpful to summarize their main idea. Even if they differ in several aspects, they share the view that art in general and music, in particular, are iconic symbols. Langer holds that artworks are “presentational” symbols of mental states identifiable with emotions. What is called “semiotic aesthetics” had its heyday in the 1940s and 1950s, but it’s been mostly rejected by contemporary analytic philosophy. Goodman’s theory of exemplificational symbols holds that an artwork is expressive when it metaphorically possesses the emotional property it exemplifies. Davies (1994: 138) summarizes it as follows: “X expresses Y if and only if X possesses Y metaphorically and it exemplifies Y. Although X does not denote Y, denotation is present within this relation—it runs from Y (the predicate) to X”. In the case of music, we could say, following Goodman, that a piece of music is sad not because music is literally sad, but because it exemplifies sadness. Sadness is then a metaphoric property of the work. One critique of this account of expression is that exemplification involves the use of a property in the artwork; but if the work already possesses such a property we are not dealing with metaphoric exemplification but with literal possession. For more information and critiques on these accounts see Davies (1994: 137-166).

There is an alternative to those positions, that is regarding emotions in music as dispositional properties. A dispositional property does not consist in a present state of the object, but in its propensity to change under a given circumstance. Applied to emotions and music, such accounts argue that music is expressive of an emotion in virtue of being able to arouse or evoke this emotion in the listener, a view defended by arousalists (also known as emotivists).

In the following sections I will consider those accounts of music expressiveness, and explore why all of them are flawed and don't offer a satisfactory account of the relation of the emotions to music. Against pure formalist views, I will explore in Chapter 2 an account that I think accommodates satisfactorily the emotions in music. But in opposition to those accounts that seek to justify the expression of emotions in music by appealing to agents outside what the music-work *is*, I will argue that there is another way in which emotive properties can be legitimately attributed to music-works. I think that music, as structured sound that occurs in time and involves movement (changing patterns of sounds), has a great potential to embody, if not felt emotions, then the appearance of the emotions being expressed. The emotional features heard in music might not be the manifestation of a mental state, they might not be felt emotions by anyone real or imaginary, but emotional features that have been drawn by specific sound arrangements, typically, in accordance with the composer's intention.

1.4. Whose emotions? The composer, the *persona* and the audience

A piece of music is taken as expressive of emotions if it contains and conveys emotive properties to the listeners. But considering that expression (as the outward manifestation of thoughts, emotions, beliefs...) is something mostly attributed to sentient agents, it seems, *prima facie*, that emotions and music can only go together if we attribute the expression of emotions in music to a

subject's emotional state, a subject that in one way or another is linked to the music.²¹

Expressiveness, however, is attributable to non-sentient agents and artworks. Expressiveness does not seem to require a corresponding felt emotion. If this is the case, we need to discover how something can be expressive without any emotion being felt.

In the next three sections I will present the accounts that typically have argued for the idea that music “expresses emotions”; i.e. that felt emotions are involved in music.

1.4.1. Expression theory

One way to connect expressiveness and expression is appealing to the composer or the performer and her emotions being expressed through the work or the performance. Expressionists assert that music “symptomizes” in an identifiable way the emotions of the composer or the performer. Classic expression theories claim (Tolstoy 1995 [1898], Dewey 1934, Collingwood 1938) that emotions in music are feelings expressed by the composer in the act of composition, and the emotions we hear in the work are the manifestation of those emotions, just as sadness is manifested in someone's tears.

Expression theories evolved during the period of nineteenth-century Romanticism, and gave to the concept of expression a central place in aesthetics. Sulzer suggests that the composer imagines some drama or situation before setting to work. Once the composer has decided the emotional character of the work in process, she should put herself in the state of mind that she wishes others to experience (Le Huray and Day 1981: 124). Beethoven is said to have put his mind into specific states while sketching many of his compositions “stimulated by those moods which poets turn into words, I turn my ideas into tones which resound, roar and rage until at last they stand before me in the

²¹ I develop the concept of expression and its problems with music in Chapter 2.

form of notes” (Morgenstern 1956: 87). The image of Beethoven, full of wrath and rage, sketching notes on the manuscript in front of his piano comes to my mind.

So, the goal of the romantic artist was to express her sincere emotions through the artwork, in this case via music, rather than eliciting or inducing them in others. Music would be able then to embody drama, heroism or victory, a vehicle to express the composer’s emotional state, or even to communicate something through it. According to expressive theories, the expressive power of music does not merely lie in that it evinces or exhibits emotions in virtue of its expressive capacities, but in that it manifests the emotions of the composer by means of a cognitive process in which the artist makes use of musical elements and the combination of them in order to achieve her goal. The creative activity must have been an act of expression since expressive properties are crucial to artworks. This approach is found in the theories of Tolstoy (1995 [1898]), Dewey (1934), Collingwood, (1938), or Osborne (1977). Tolstoy, in *What is Art?* (1995 [1898]) defends the idea that the main function of art is the communication of emotion, and that it is the artist who expresses a particular emotion through her work, which in turn induces it in the audience. Collingwood (1938) takes expression to be the core of art, and the exploration of the artist’s emotions the proper way to understand the work.

Summarizing, expression theory answers the question of how emotions are a part of music by saying that musical expression becomes the outward manifestation of the artist into the artistic medium, the manifestation of the emotions felt by the composer in the act of composition. The music-work is expressive of the author’s emotional state.²²

However this view of music and expression presents several problems. The most evident problem is that sometimes the composer fails to manifest in the work what she feels in the creative process, at least in a way that is recognizable to the listener. Composers do not always succeed in pouring their feelings into

²² For a deep account of expression theories and discussions involved, see Robinson 1983.

their composition. This might happen for example because the artist did not select, or combine, appropriately the musical elements. In other words, she did not write the right kind of piece. So, it is possible that we hear emotional properties that were not felt or intended to be expressed by the composer, or at least that we don't hear what she wanted to express in her work. That being the case, we could say that a music-work is expressive *independently* of the emotion that the author is experiencing at the time of composition.

Another problem is that very often the composer does not experience the emotion her music is expressive of. Creative processes vary from author to author, and also depend on the particular moment in which the creation takes place. Different techniques are involved while writing music. Probably Bach and Beethoven did not share the same one: more automated in the case of Bach, and more instinctive in Beethoven.

In any case, it is not clear at all that all composers involve themselves in an affective state accordant with the emotional character of the work, or that the latter are the result of their emotive states. Often composers work on demand, and cannot wait to find the emotional tone they intend to confer on their work. It seems quite improbable that Bach for example, who wrote such a vast amount of work under commission for the protestant church (more than 300 cantatas), experienced all the emotions expressed in his compositions while composing them. Composers usually do not work under the emotion that they allegedly manifest in their work. Beethoven wrote the joyous final movement of the Piano Concerto No. 1 being ill with gastroenteritis. (Davies, 1994: 172) Examples can be found in many works that are not devoid of expressive qualities and yet have been the result of tedious, methodical and regular work. For instance, in *Themes and Conclusions* (1972) Stravinsky explains how he wrote his Symphony in C during his unhappiest period in his life, between 1939 and 1940. Ill with tuberculosis, he was enclosed in a sanatorium with his wife and family. There, a daughter and his wife died, and shortly after so did his mother. He had to bury three beloved family members in half a year; however, he confessed he was able to survive thanks to the work he was composing at

that time. Looking back in 1963 he wrote referring to that composition: “(...) But I did not seek to overcome my grief by portraying or giving expression to it in music, and you will listen in vain, I think, for traces of this sort of personal emotion.” (Stravinsky 1972: 48)

The idea of artistic inspiration and the picture of the artist discharging her emotions into the score are very close to expression theories. But it cannot be generalized to all cases. Very often, behind compositions lies a process of methodical concentration and careful work that could not be carried out while emotions disrupt the task. Waiting for the ideal inspirational mood would be a luxury for many composers and impossible to afford given that many works require weeks, months or even years of thorough work; for many others, it would be a distraction and a disruption of the creative work.

So even if the music-work sounds expressive of particular emotions, we cannot infer from it that those emotive features manifested in the piece are the author’s emotions in the time of the composition. Therefore, what listeners understand about music or hear expressed in music, needs to be found somewhere other than in the composer’s mind and, I will argue, in the music itself.

The arguments above show that music can be expressive of an emotion independently of the composer’s emotional state at the time of composition. Thinking that the artist infuses the work with her emotions is wrong or, at best, misleading. I won’t deny that sometimes composers succeed in expressing their emotions in the works they write, but that cannot be taken as the paradigmatic case or the way we recover music’s expressive power. We cannot infer any emotion in the artist from the emotional character of a work. Moreover, Collingwood’s account (1938) as a theory of art has much more obvious limitations, in that not all art is expressive, or even if it is, expressiveness is not what makes it aesthetically relevant and artistically valuable. An example of this can be found in Bach’s *Well-Tempered Clavier*, a work of the utmost aesthetic beauty to which expressiveness is not normally attributed. With Tormey (1971),

I conclude that an artwork may have expressive qualities without there being necessarily a prior act of expression by the author.²³

1.4.2. Persona theory

Expression and expressiveness in music can be put together in the case of absolute music without appealing to the composer's mental state at the time of the composition, if we consider that the emotions heard in music are the expression of the inner state of a persona *inhabiting* the music or that the heard emotions are regarded as the manifestation of someone's emotional state. This idea has been defended by several authors, including Levinson (1996, 2005), Robinson (2005) and Walton (1988, 1990). This proposal could be interpreted as a heuristics, or as a theory that applies only to a particular kind of music.

The expressive character of an artwork, in general, and of a music-work, in particular, can be explained because it *seems* to be the manifestation of the emotional state of someone. We could say for example that the melancholic character of a piece of music is such in virtue of its dark harmonic progressions in minor and diminished chords, its slow tempo and the downcast melodic lines, but what makes us call it melancholic is that its character "seems to be" the expression of someone's melancholy. This position is defended by Robinson (2004: 180). The character inferred from the work, could be an artist, a narrator or a character-persona of the work itself. Collingwood's expressionist idea of music is not completely rejected in this account but slightly modified: expression in music remains, as the manifestation of the emotional state of an agent in the artistic medium, not the composer himself, but an *implied artist or persona*.

A stronger position is defended by Levinson (1996, 2005). According to him we experience music as an expression of emotions, as the emotional externalization of someone's sadness, "imagining" that music is the expression of an emotion by some indefinite fictional agent, the persona, a character that

²³ I introduce Tormey's critic in Chapter 2.

the cultivated listener might discover in the music. Levinson emphasizes that this way of hearing music is *always* required for the appreciation of music's expressiveness by an appropriately experienced listener. Such a strong view of expression is shown in the following quotation:

A passage of music P is expressive of an emotion E if and only if P, in context, is readily heard, by a listener experienced in the genre in question, as an expression of E. (...) To hear music as such and such is, perhaps, to imagine *that* the music is such and such, and more specifically, to imagine *of* the music, *as* you are hearing it, that it is such and such (Levinson 1996: 193-195).

In other words, the listener of a piece of music hears the persona as externalizing something. A symphony with many expressive properties, for instance, can be imagined as embodying an agent, a musical persona who is making expressive utterances of joy, anger and so on. There is no need to appeal to the "composer's voice" (Cone 1974) or imagine that Beethoven's 9th Symphony is the musical representation of Beethoven's joy. All we need is to imagine the persona as a fictional character expressing emotions. As Levinson (1996) puts it, music can be expressive of the inner state of a persona by means of its dynamic gestures, in a *sui generis* musical manner.

In short, musical expressiveness is explained by the listener's imaginative response to the work, by its power to evoke in imagination a vivid impression of real emotions being felt. The listeners imagine the persona expressing her emotions in music as the externalization of her inner psychology (Levinson 1982, 1996, 2005). A musical passage is heard as sad because the hypothetical character is imagined to be sad. So, music is expressive if the listener hears in it the expression of an imaginative character's emotion.

The persona theory's account of expressiveness is inspired in the fictional worlds offered by novels, films, plays or operas: it points at imagined personae, characters inhabiting the musical "world." Unlike expression theory, the persona theory avoids referring to a subject's occurrent emotion to explain whose emotion is the one expressed by the music.

The plausibility of the persona theory lies in that it ties expression of a persona's emotional state with the expressive character of the work, like the way in which a person's face, voice or gait evinces her emotional state. This is at least Robinson's (2004) idea. Following that, the external manifestation of people's emotional states (say gestures, body movements, tone of voice...) are paralleled with music's outward features. And real mental states are paralleled with implied mental states of an alleged persona. However, I think this analogy does not hold for several reasons.

First, we cannot find in absolute music any justification to identify such an implied persona towards which emotions in music can be directed to, or to decide whether a particular imagined content is correct or not. In fiction (novels, films, plays, et cetera) much information about the fictional world is conveyed. The plot, the characters and the description of scenes are the backbone that will channel the audience's imagination. But in absolute music this does not work. In absence of lyrics or some other sort of narrative content, a fictional character is nowhere to be found. There is little reason to take the imagination of the listener so "seriously"; at least it is not trustworthy enough to be regarded as an objective basis for music expressiveness. Making up personae to justify the place of emotions in music says very little about the work.

Second, appealing to a persona's emotions does not answer why a specific musical passage has this power to evoke (in the case that it does) such emotions in us. While listening to a song, to its particular musical-expressive features, I may imagine someone or even myself being affected by the character I detect in the music; this image may evoke in us past memories, moments of our childhood. However, and be that as it may, those images and responses are triggered by *this* piece music. So, whatever characters inhabiting this musical world come to our mind, the trigger for this should be found *in* the music.

Third, this narrow view of expression (understood as the manifestation of someone's feelings), doesn't seem to be the notion of expression that corresponds to music. In the same way that not all human outward

externalization of emotions (gestures, body movements, tone of voice...) involve felt emotions, we could think that neither a fearful music passage, or a joyful one, involve the feelings of fear or joy by someone.

For these reasons, I contend that appealing to the listener's imagination to answer how music (especially absolute music) can express emotions is not appropriate. Whatever the listener imagines, it reveals more about the listener than about the music, and this is not what we are attempting to discover. The answer, if any, should be found in the perceptual musical features and not anywhere else.

1.4.3. Arousal theory

Let's consider a third possibility. Some argue that music is expressive of an emotion, in virtue of its tendency to arouse the corresponding emotion in a qualified listener, a view defended by arousalists (or emotivists). They take expression in music to consist in the power to move the listener to an affective state; but not any listener, an understanding listener: one that attends closely to the work. The simplest version of arousal theory could be formulated as follows (with M as music, E an emotion, L a listener):

(1) M is E = M arouses E in L²⁴

Sad music is prone to make people feel sad, joyful music is prone to make listeners happy. So the emotions expressed in a music-work are those experienced by the listener. A piece of music is melancholic because under normal circumstances it makes normal listeners feel melancholic.

²⁴ This formulation, and the following ones, have been borrowed from Davies (1994: 185, 187, 189), but I allow myself to introduce a little change. In the quoted passage Davies states "M is E = M evokes E in L". I substituted "evokes" by "arouses." The first entry of the verb "evoke" in the dictionary (New Oxford American Dictionary (2005) says "bring or recall (a feeling, a memory or an image) to the conscious mind". Also, entry 1.1. "to elicit a response". It seems to me that evoking a feeling or an emotion then, does not clearly imply a feeling response, or an emotional state caused by whatever.

Arousal theories emphasize the moving power of music, and the importance of the affective involvement of the audience. But following this view, we could logically deduce that in the absence of, for example, a melancholic response, the piece of music could not be regarded as melancholic or as having melancholy among its expressive properties, which makes it a quite a difficult statement to be generalized. So arousal theory in its simplest version has some problems, which revisionists of the theory will try to answer in different ways.

At first sight we might think that arousal theories, rather than explaining emotions in music, focus on how music provokes emotions in the listener. It could be objected that to describe the listener's emotive reaction to music is not to describe what music is expressive of. Arousalists have answered that, even if the experience of the emotions expressed belongs to the listener, it is correct to attribute expressiveness to music as a *dispositional* property to arouse emotions in the listener.

The argument of analogy with colors and expressive properties of music is defended for example by Speck (1988). Under standard conditions, normal observers attribute the color green to fresh grass, and the experience of color can be said to be shared by most people. That's why we consider it appropriate to attribute greenness to grass rather than to the observer's experience. The same argument is applied to emotions and music. Responses to music have normally an interpersonal validity in a similar way to when we perceive colors or smells (Davies 1994: 185). They usually converge, and according to arousal theories this is reason enough to assume that the emotional experience tells us more about music than about the listener.

It could be objected, however, that just as color perception depends on principles related to the absorption and reflection of light, and on its effect on the optic nerve, music should also follow principles that make it powerful to affect listeners emotionally in specific ways. If music must possess properties or principles that cause such responses, they should be describable and identifiable within music, there is no need to appeal to the listener's response to

explain why music is expressive. If that's right, an improved version of arousal theory could be summarized as follows:

(2) M is $E = M$ arouses E in L in virtue of its possessing properties a, b, c (properties that might be specified in musically technical terms without reference to E)²⁵

Even if this approach answers some objections, it still has to face the problem of many counterexamples. Music often triggers particular memories, associations and correspondent emotional responses. Other times the listener is distracted or lacks an appropriate response to music expressiveness for whatever reason. Often we react to music-works in a way that can hardly be attributed to the particular music-work. We may get irritated, for instance, listening to joyful music, amazed by dreadful music, saddened by a joyful song, etc.. Cases like these are frequent, and count at first sight against arousalists' main thesis. However most arousalists hold that not just any emotional response to music reveals the emotional character of the musical piece.

Two main lines of reply to such objections are offered by arousalists: (i) arguing that despite appearances in most of the cases shown by counterexamples, the listener's response is not elicited by music but by something outside it; (ii) identifying factors that pervert listeners' tendency to respond in a way that reveals music's expressive character. So, for many arousal theorists, listening attentively, listening appropriately, free from interference or inhibiting or deviating factors, are the conditions required by the arousal theory as an account of music expressiveness. This could count as a revisited formula for the arousal thesis:

(3) M is $E = M$ tends to arouse E in L , given that L attends to the music in the absence of factors that inhibit or interfere with L 's emotional response to M .²⁶

²⁵ See previous footnote.

²⁶ See previous footnote.

In any case, a thorough list of those factors should be written for the arousal version to be fully developed. Something quite difficult to achieve, as I will argue soon.

A better way of dealing with such counterexamples would be to claim that those exceptions exist, but that they don't refute arousal theory. The answer adopted by some authors (see Mew 1985) is to explain that not all aroused emotions are to be taken as responses to the emotive properties of the work: among aroused responses, we should distinguish between those aroused by the work's expressive power and those aroused by other aspects of the piece..

Given that emotion has cognitive, physiological and phenomenological components, we find that the response to absolute music lacks the cognitive component that characterizes emotions. For example, feeling pity is a response of the appropriate kind in the case of sad music, but not sadness. The response to music cannot be an object cognitively-directed at, or founded on emotion, and that's precisely why such aroused feelings do not motivate us to action in the way other emotional experiences do. Sad music is sad when it arouses the physiological and phenomenal aspects of pity (a feeling).

Even though arousal theory, in its revised versions, can be seen as an attractive answer to the problem of expressiveness in music, it generates several new problems. We have seen already the problems that the simple arousalist thesis ("M is E = M arouses E in L") presents. It follows from this that, *if there is no emotional response, then there is no expressiveness in the music piece,* which as I have argued, is pretty implausible.

Such close dependence of music expressiveness on the listener's reaction entails that, in the case of the absence of an audience, the expressiveness of music cannot be explained. But, even if we admitted that the expressive properties of music have to be understood as dispositional properties (remember the analogy with the perception of colors), such a capacity and the rules or conditions of the emotive power would still reside *in* the music-work, I contend.

Regarding the analogy of colors and music's expressive properties, it could be argued that the experience of music is much more culture-bound than the perception of color (Davies 1994: 186) and that the response to specific expressive properties in music is not universal. If the experience varies from one musical context to another, even if we admit there is a high degree of convergence in a given musical culture, it seems difficult to see how music expressiveness can be explained by appeal to listeners' response.

The second definition²⁷ is not satisfactory either. On the one hand, we do not need to appeal to the response at all to point out the properties in music in virtue of which (according to definition 2) listeners respond emotionally. It is not because it elicits specific emotions that a piece of music is expressive, but because it possesses the alleged musical features. For example, properties such as light and major key harmonies, loud dynamics, galloping melodies and fast tempo in a music piece are what makes it sound cheerful, and maybe also prone to arouse a cheerful feeling in the listener. But not the other way around.

The third definition²⁸ attempts to clarify that not any emotive response is valid to attribute an expressive feature to a music-work. I completely share the idea that among our emotional reactions to music, not all of them are linked to its expressive character. However, it is not easy to define such factors and what is understood as the appropriate listening for such arousal to be justified. We mentioned before some counterexamples and cases in which the expressive character of music and the listener's response mismatch: the listener is irritated with the melancholic banality of a song; the listener associates a joyful song with a fearful past experience; the listener is not emotionally affected to the expressive character of music; or prefers avoiding emotional involvement in the

27 M is E = M arouses E in L in virtue of its possessing properties *a*, *b*, *c* (properties that might be specified in musically technical terms without reference to E).

28 M is E = M tends to arouse E in L, given that L attends to the music in the absence of factors that inhibit or interfere with L's emotional response to M.

listening experience in favor of a more intellectual listening experience; et cetera.

From such a perspective, it is difficult to find the criteria to differentiate an appropriate response from an inappropriate one. We may appeal to an attentive, interested listener, not infected by personal or external factors, to define the appropriate affective response to a particular piece of music. But even in that case, just by appealing to listeners' feelings (as arousalists propose) it is practically impossible to discern when a response is affected by factors external to that expressed by the music-work, and when it is not. Such a conclusive list of constraints is difficult to write. And even if we did, we would still find counterexamples that show how sometimes the emotive reactions to music do not correspond to those expected from its expressive character.

For example, it could happen that even attending to music with attention and discernment, avoiding "contaminating" our emotional reaction to the music with personal factors, the listener's emotional reaction to the music is not necessarily the one corresponding to the work's emotional character. The Beatles' *Yellow Submarine*, a song that (independently of its lyrics) is regarded as expressive of joy and vitality, may neither arouse in us joy nor vitality, but emotional indifference or even disgust to the simple march like rhythm of the song. Similar examples could be found in instrumental music. So, the relation of the expressive character of music and our "parallel" reaction to it is not something we could generalize, and less so if we aim to explain, by means of such responses, what music expressiveness consists in.

I won't deny that there is some convergence in the responses of the listeners to the expressive character of music. But not everybody is moved by expressive music, not even every attentive and experienced listener. And when they do, it is unlikely that they are all moved in exactly the same way. So instead of looking for the ideal type of response to explain the work's expressive character (and account for music expressiveness as a dispositional property), we should find a way in which music-work's expressiveness is explained in itself.

Before rejecting arousal theory as a convincing account of music expressiveness, let's try one more definition. Let's consider the following:

(4) M is E = M arouses E in L in virtue of its possessing properties *a*, *b*, *c* (describable musical properties) and just when M tends to arouse E in L, given that L attends to the music in the absence of factors that inhibit or interfere with L's emotional response to M.

It follows from this definition that possessing properties *a*, *b*, *c* is not sufficient to arouse in the listener the appropriate response and that appropriate listening is required for music expressiveness. But we should still have to answer to other counterexamples. Despite the absence of interfering, inhibiting or contaminating factors to that response, listeners could be able to identify the expressive character of music (and most probably the musical properties responsible for it), and nevertheless not be susceptible to feeling the corresponding emotions or to feel any emotions at all. Moreover, we still would have to face the problem of cases in which it is precisely a work's expressive feature (and not some other aspect of the work) which arouses an emotion that does not correspond to the expressed emotion.

So, in regard to the expressive power of music, I contend that an arousalist theory does not offer any satisfactory account. Appealing to its power to arouse correspondent emotions or feelings in the listener (when the appropriate conditions are met) results in a circular argument: if the emotive response of a listener is the criteria to explain music expressiveness, our emotive responses to music cannot be explained by appeal to music's expressive capacity. As Kania (2014) puts it, if the listener's response depends upon the emotion music is expressive of, the expressiveness of music cannot depend upon the response.

In conclusion, arousal theories attach great importance to the music's power to move us, and I agree that the listener's affective response is sometimes closely related to the emotional character of the music-work. As we said, listeners often respond with feelings that mirror those emotive qualities in

music, and sometimes sad music tends to make people feel sad, and joyful music to feel happy. However, such connections are not regular enough to conclude that expression in music can be explained in terms of listener's emotional response.

As I argued, it is neither sufficient, and as I will explain in the next section, nor necessary. So, I conclude that when we describe a passage of music in emotional terms it is not right to appeal to its dispositional properties to move us in a particular way. I think that we should ascribe these properties to the musical passage itself and that our reactions are not what make a musical piece expressive.

I propose to inverse the focus to the musical event: sad music is not sad because it may arouse sad emotions in the listener, but sad feelings may be aroused because music "is sad", or better, expressive of sadness. So, music is not expressive because it causes emotional reactions in us, but for some other reason.

1.5. Music cannot express emotions: pure formalism

Besides approaches to emotions and music that seek to justify how emotions enter into music, another possible way to clarify such a problematic relation is simply by denying that there is any direct relationship between music and emotions at all. Pure formalist accounts will hold that there is no place for emotion inside music, that music is unable to express emotions. This passage from Stravinsky's *Autobiography* shows quite naturally the main idea of formalism:

"For I consider that music is, by its very nature, essentially powerless to express anything at all, whether a feeling, an attitude of mind, a psychological mood, a phenomenon of nature, etc. Expression has never been an inherent property of music. That is by no means the purpose of its existence. If, as is

nearly always the case, music appears to express something, this is only an illusion and not a reality. It is simply an additional attribute which, by tacit and inveterate agreement, we have lent it, thrust upon it, as a label, a convention—in short, an aspect which, unconsciously or by force of habit, we have come to confuse with its essential being.” (Stravinsky 1936: 53-54)

Formalism is an account of music more difficult to define than it seems at first glance, because it encompasses different versions that resemble each other in some aspects but differ in others. The very use of the word “form” is problematic, as we will see later. It is an “ill-chosen word” as Kivy puts it (2002: 67). If we look for its historical roots we find in Kant one of its ancestors, even if the interpretation of his ideas on aesthetics is a source of much controversy and not everybody agrees in turning to Kant for the philosophical foundation of music formalism. A clearer formalist position was later developed by Hanslick (1986 [1891]), and at present, in softer versions, by Peter Kivy (1990, 2001a, 2001b, 2007, 2009), Malcolm Budd (1995), Stephen Davies (1994) or more recently by Nick Zangwill (2015).

In its broad sense, music, absolute music more precisely, is taken by formalists as “a structure of sound events without semantic or representational content” (Kivy 2002: 89), where emotions do not have a clear place. It focuses on how sound's perceptual properties are organized in a structure that develops in time. So the essence and the interest of music should be found in its formal structure, and not in emotive properties and less in any other sort of propositional or representational content. Trying to get further and attribute any extra-musical content to music, is surpassing its boundaries. Music is not about anything beyond music, but just about itself.

It is Hanslick's *On the Musically Beautiful* (1986 [1891]) (*Vom Musicalish Schönen* in the original German version) where we find the prototype of musical formalism. This little book, full of inspirational ideas on music, offers an account against feeling theories, an account of music in which emotions have

no place.²⁹ We could summarize his main ideas on music and emotions as follows.

Two statements show what Hanslick calls the negative and the positive thesis: (i) The defining purpose of music is not to represent, express or arouse feelings; (ii) “The content of music is tonally moving forms” (*Der Inhalt der Musik sind tönend bewegte Formen*), not the representation or expression of feeling. This implies that what is musically beautiful is inherent to music, and has to be found in its “tonal relationships”³⁰ and artistic combinations, not in extra-musical contents or any sort of meaning. Music “has a sense and logic—but musical sense and logic” (Hanslick 1986 [1891]: 30), an ordered-formal structure similar to the syntax of languages; according to Kivy (2012).

The methodological error committed, according to Hanslick, in musical aesthetics up to his time, is to look for an account of the feelings that take possession of us when we hear music, rather than investigating what is beautiful *in* music. He advocates a scientific approach to music that avoids subjective feelings as the content of music. With this, Hanslick does not deny that the contemplation of beautiful music can arouse pleasant feelings; nor that, as some composers declare, putting their mind in a particular emotional state while composing might help in the creative process. The point is that music has no other purpose but pure aesthetic enjoyment, something we attain with the contemplation of its form, which is nothing more than the combination of the musical material: the rhythm (the animating principle), the system of tones (the basic material), the harmonic structure and timbre, which makes music a kaleidoscope of multiple colors and combinations.

²⁹ I used the English translation of Payzant, a wholly new translation from the original book in German, and not a revision of the first English translation done by Gustav Cohen, first appeared in 1891.

³⁰ Note that “tone” for Hanslick is a specific kind of sound, of determinate and measurable pitch, perceived as having a specific position or degree on the scale.

So following Hanslick, to induce feelings in us is not the task of music, and it is not by means of those aroused feelings that we will be aware of its beauty. A sort of disinterested listening³¹, far away from practical purposes is what the listener must reach, free of the authority of subjective feeling. The latter is no more than a secondary effect, not part of its inner nature, but dependent upon the particular circumstances and context.

In this account, instrumental music shows the purely musical nature. Out of words and lyrics we find the magnificence and the power of combining musical formal elements. But such music cannot represent the ideas of love, fear or anger. Nothing is expressed but “musical ideas.”

Which is the attribute that music can present about feelings? In other words, given that feelings are not the content of music, what do feelings and music have in common? The answer given by Hanslick to this question is “motion”. Motion is “the ingredient which music has in common with emotional states and which it is able to shape creatively in a thousand shades and contrasts” (Hanslick 1986 [1891]: 11). But what the attentive listener hears is not emotive properties, but how the tones ascend, descend, sprinkle, are repeated in other passages and shape before the ear a melodic symmetry between different bars, how the bass marks the rhythm and how the melody is harmonized during the composition.³² The content of music is the conjunction of all its musical elements.

It is true, he admits, that we use predicates like “witty”, “banal”, “insipid”, “graceful” or “dull” to describe music; we also characterize the expressiveness of a musical motif or passage with emotive properties like “arrogant”, “tender”,

³¹ The idea of disinterestedness has its roots in Kantian aesthetics. According to him, pure judgments of taste require us to take distance, to look at art works impartially, in a disinterested way, as “free delight”. We judge things as beautiful independently of whether they serve our personal interest or not. That’s why Kant defines taste as “the faculty of judging an object or a mode of representation by means of a delight or aversion *apart from any interest*. The object of such delight is called *beautiful*” (Kant, 2008 [1790]: 42 (§7))

³² Extracts from examples given by Hanslick (1986 [1891]).

“spirited”; other features of the realm of appearance like “fragrant”, “chilly” or “hazy” are also attributed to music (Hanslick 1986 [1891]: 32). Due to the difficulty of describing music in non-technical language, since it has no prototype in nature and no conceptual content, we resort to “poetical fictions (Hanslick 1986 [1891]: 30). But according to Hanslick in all those cases we are simply using emotive terms in a figurative way, extracting them from the vocabulary of our emotive life to describe purely musical ideas. Behind such terms, there is no expressive property intrinsic to music, but all we find is “tonally moving form”, the sensuous manifestation of musical tonal relationships, organized in a unique fashion in each work. The proficient composer avails of her knowledge and mastery to choose and combine effectively musical elements. But what we hear is nothing else but the result of this work, pure musical form.

1.6. Conclusions

In this chapter I have arrived to the following conclusions:

1) Music has no representational nor propositional meaning (it has no depictive content). Absolute music is not about anything but itself. Quoting Kivy’s beautiful metaphor, “absolute music is a solitary dancer” (Kivy 2009: 210).

2) Music does not possess emotions like humans do. Emotions in music are not felt emotions.

3) Musical expressiveness cannot be explained by appealing to any subject’s actual emotion. The expressiveness heard in music cannot either be attributed to the composer or to the performer. Nor to imaginary personae.

4) Music may arouse emotions or emotion-like feelings in the listener, but music expressiveness cannot be explained appealing to such emotions.

5) Pure formalist arguments leave no place for emotions in music, so we should revise such account in order to explain why is that we attribute emotive properties to music.

As Levinson pointed out, two different questions often get involved in discussions of expression in art: “what is expression?” and “how do works of art achieve expression?” or “what are the grounds for artistic expression.” As we saw, the second one becomes especially problematic when we deal with absolute music (Robinson, 2005: 272). A convincing account of musical expressiveness, then, should explain at least the following issues. First, the meaning of “expression” when we attribute expressive properties to music. Second, an explanation of how music works acquire their expressive properties. And third, the significance of such “expression” in music for its artistic appreciation and value, and see if it is essential to them.

In the next chapter, I will deal with the first issue and clarify what is meant by “expression” when it is attributed to absolute music.

Chapter 2

2. A cognitivist approach to music expressiveness

Up to now I have reached some negative conclusions. I argued so far that music does not represent emotions; representation entails the intentional depiction of something else, i.e. it entails a meaningful content. Music does not say anything, it is not about anything, nor points to something outside itself. In absolute

music there is no “depictive” or any other extra-musical content. So, we don’t perceive the expressive-making features of music as representing anything beyond music and we neither understand what a musical theme “means” in the sense that we understand what a linguistic utterance means.

In this chapter I will present a positive thesis. I will argue for a cognitivist point of view with regard to music’s emotive properties, and take emotive properties of music as perceived features of it. Briefly put, I will argue that we hear emotive properties *in* music, and that it is *there*, in the music, where we find its expressiveness.

2.1. Formalism revisited

Music formalism focuses in what is truly musical, the sound event, the formal structure and its purely musical elements. The formalist ontological account puts music in a prominent place among art genres, explaining its nature without appeal to extra-musical contents like external objects, characters, lyrics or narrative sources. Musically moving tones are the focus of attention from a formalist perspective and the analysis of its musical structures becomes the appropriate description of the musical object, which I think is the right approach to take.

However, holding a strong formalist perspective regarding music imposes several limitations.

As I explained before, a strong formalist position (e.g. Hanslick 1986 [1891]) entails that music either cannot embody emotions, or that if it does, those emotive properties would not have any relevant role for appreciation of music. Following Hanslick, absolute music’s aesthetic value resides in its “specifically musical kind of beauty, (...) self-contained and in no need of [emotive] content from outside itself (...)” (Hanslick 1986 [1891]: 28).³³ Pure

³³ For further information about Hanslick’s formalism, see Kivy 2002: 63-64.

formalism holds that the content of music is nothing more than “tonally moving forms” (Hanslick 1986 [1891]: 28) or pure sound structure. That being so, a formalist account of music does not seem to be compatible with music expressiveness.

One of the arguments behind Hanslick’s negative thesis is that given that (i) music cannot represent thoughts, and (ii) definite feelings involve thoughts, then (iii) music cannot express definite emotions. This idea has been attacked by denying that thoughts are an essential part of emotions and defending that not all emotions are object directed (Budd 1985: 24-25); or by arguing that sometimes music also calls to mind certain thoughts (Levinson 1990). These positions aim at preserving a place for emotions in music at any cost, so to speak. But I think it is a wrong line to take. As I see it, Hanslick’s error does not lie in denying that music can express definite emotions (I think he is right here), but in restricting the notion of “expression of emotion” in music to that which involves thought and feeling. Once we admit that this notion of emotion is not applicable to music and we broaden it, music emotive descriptions make sense.

This exclusion of the affective side of music is extended also to listeners’ attitudes and responses. The ideal listener according to formalist accounts of music is one that does not approach a listening experience under the influence of feelings or focuses her attention on what is heard as expressive. Hanslick (1986 [1891]: 50) claims that when listening to music under the influence of a distressing or agitated mood, for example, the character of what is heard loses its significance and we no longer hear music. On the other hand, he argues that if physiological reactions or feelings are aroused while listening to music, they are no more than a secondary effect of music, and that we cannot understand its nature by that means. Kivy (2006, 2007, 2009) follows his predecessor in this matter. His “canonical way” of listening to music is free from personal associations and mind wanderings. Behind this formalist idea lies the assumption that those attitudes contaminate a purely musical experience and appreciation of a work. Appealing to how people are moved by music, to how music affects the listener or the performer, reveals more about the subject than

about the musical work, given that music on its own does not have the power to elicit any kind of emotive response.

However, I think there is still hope for a place for emotions in music in the formalist picture for the following reasons:

1. Experiencing and enjoying the emotive character of the work in a listening experience does not imply deviating attention from the musically formal elements, as far as the former are derived from the latter. This requires us to discern the expressive features inherent to the music work from the subjective emotive connotations listeners or performers sometimes give to the work. The difficulty lies in finding an explanation of how the formal and emotive properties of music are related.
2. Performers and specially listeners are affected by music in various ways. I won't defend that any sort of emotional response is relevant to understanding a music-work. But I think some affective responses are directly connected with the expressive character of the work and are elicited by it. The nature of such responses and how they might occur I will explore later.

Given that formalism, in its broad sense, takes music as “a structure of sound events without semantic or representational content” (Kivy 2002: 89), we could accommodate emotional properties in music if we understand them as heard properties derived from its formal structure, as Kivy's “enhanced formalism”³⁴ somehow does. It can be considered as an enhancement of Hanslick's formalism “allowing to include emotive properties as perceptual properties *of the music*, in other words, aesthetic properties in Sibley's sense” (Kivy 2009: 98). So, I take from formalism the primary role of form and structure and the idea that music is constructed upon the connections of sound patterns; but I am not to deny that expressiveness plays a role in music appreciation, enjoyment or understanding. It must be music's abstract form and

³⁴ Kivy's formalist account was labelled as “enhanced formalism” by Phillip Alperson, and adopted by Kivy himself in Kivy 2009.

the perceptual elements that integrate it, devoid of any meaning and content beyond what is purely musical, which provides the elements required to exhibit emotional qualities.

2.2. The uses of “expression”, and expressiveness in the arts

We say that a face expresses terror; that someone’s gait and walking expresses sadness; that freedom of speech allows us to express our ideas; that the film expresses the suffering of a time; that a student expresses herself incorrectly; that the ballet’s performance was expressive; that a face of a Saint Bernard dog expresses sadness; or, that the weeping pillow’s shape reflects a sad expression.

The name “expression” and the verb “to express” are used in various contexts and adopt different meanings or senses depending on each of them. Ideas, emotions, opinions can be expressed. But what is exactly meant when it is said to “express” something, or that an object has an expression of something?

I take as expression (in a general sense) the manifestation or the action of making known something by means of certain elements. Ideas, opinions, thoughts or emotions are examples of what can be expressed. Words, gestures, body movements, facial expressions, a picture, a dance performance, the shape of a natural object, or a music passage, are examples of the elements throughout which the object of expression is manifested. “Expression” is not limited to conscious agents. Natural elements, lifeless objects or artworks can also be expressive. When a person expresses something, or when her voice, gestures, walking or gait are expressive, what is meant is that certain elements manifest certain other elements of the subject, suggesting somehow what sort of things those other elements might be.

Characteristically “to express an emotion” means to manifest a feeling state, as Kania (2014) points out, it is “the outward manifestation of an emotional

state". Following that, tears express sadness only if the subject is sad, or if the subject pretends to be sad. The dictionary has another sense³⁵ for the noun "expression": "a look on someone's face that conveys a particular emotion: *a sad expression.*" This is fine as long as we extend the use of "expression" and concede that in a broader sense it can be used also in cases in which there is no felt emotion behind the expressive object. The sad face can be expressive of sadness even if the subject does not feel sad. I will analyse such a broader sense shortly.

Expressiveness can be taken as the function of the expressive elements of what is expressed. Whether that which is expressed (an idea, a thought, an emotion) is literally there or not is another matter. It is something that not just humans possess, but potentially something that artworks also have.

Let's think about fiction, say, the anguished face of Marion in *Psycho* as the knife approaches the curtain. We can detect anguish and terror in her movement, notice terror in her face; we would say Marion's face is expressive of anger. We would even attribute felt anger or panic to Marion, to the fictional character she represents, however we are aware that there is nobody experiencing such a feeling out there. In this case the use of "expression" does not need to be taken as the expression of a felt emotion. Certain elements of the subject (Marion's face) suggest that something is being expressed. However, in fiction it is not the feeling of an occurrent emotion that is being expressed, but what we perceive is the appearance, in ordinary cases, of the outward manifestation of that specific emotional state, in this case the appearance of terror. And in fact, it is well known that Hitchcock used quite perverse methods with the actresses and actors of his films in order to provoke the most realistic expressive reactions he could. Tippy Hedren was one of his victims. The freezing-cold water shower of the *Psycho* scene, or the martinis he made her drink to lose her shyness and reserve, seem almost naïve if we compare it with

³⁵ New Oxford American Dictionary (2005).

the tactics he used in shooting *The Birds*³⁶. The terror gestures were expressions of real terror in this particular case. (Spoto 2008 [1983])

From these sorts of examples we see that the word “expression” acquires different uses in different contexts. We can say that the paradigm of expression occurs when a person externalizes a felt emotion or a thought by means of outward features. When there is suffering and sadness but the subject does not externalize it, we don’t talk about expression. On the contrary, tears may betray the sadness that a person feels when a family member is suffering, but tears alone don’t express sadness in a full sense. Obviously, we can also express in words that which we don’t really feel, believe or think. The actress is not really feeling what the character of Marion in *Psycho* is supposed to be feeling for the audience. However, some elements externalize or exhibit the outward features of how such emotions (or thoughts) are expressed in ordinary cases, and that’s why it is not strange to say that Marion’s face expresses terror. But what is given is the appearance of emotion being felt, her eyes and mouth wide open, a scream, the dramatic raising of arms and her body’s contraction. What the audience perceives is the outward display of an emotional episode, an expressive appearance, not a real affective state. It seems that the word “expression” then acquires a different use in fiction: a use in which emotions are not felt but evinced; the same use when we say we are “actors” in real life, feigning what we don’t feel, think or believe.

If we translate this into music, we find no actors, no characters that pretend to feel any sort of emotion, or ideas and thoughts. In the case of the emotional features we attribute to music, what is being expressed may be linked to the outward manifestation of an emotion; but unless we adopt an arousalist or persona account (positions I rejected in Chapter 1) it must be admitted that nothing is being actually expressed. Music expressiveness becomes a

³⁶ Before shooting the final attack of the birds she was said that they would use mechanical birds, but in the last moment they changed their mind. The result would have been too artificial. So poor Tippy Hedren was literally tortured in a kind of cage by real seagulls and crows during the whole shooting of the final scene. (Spoto 2008 [1983]: 397-398)

philosophical problem, since neither music-works, nor performances of them are psychological, sentient agents.

That being so, there are three ways to tackle the problem of music expressiveness. One is to deny that music is expressive of emotions (in its broad sense). The second one is to justify the parallelism of music and fiction, pointing at a subject that is implicitly expressing emotions.³⁷ And the third one, the approach I take, which is to extend the use of “expression” to cases in which expressive features are detected, but no emotion is felt, nor simulated, but just where the emotion or emotions are exhibited. This is the case of absolute music, I contend.

2.3. Music exhibits emotions

The distinction made by Tormey (1971) in his critique of Collingwood’s expression theory helps clarify my argument. It provides an insight into the idea that a work of art can have expressive qualities without a prior act of expression of emotions.³⁸ He distinguishes between the notions of “expression of X” and “X-expression”.

The first phrase, the “expression of X”, suggests that there is something being expressed, that someone is manifesting her own state of mind by virtue of showing specific emotional signs. If something or someone *expresses* sadness it stands in the appropriate relation to occurrent sadness. This is what I took before as a paradigmatic use of the word “expression”.

The second usage of the noun expression or “X-expression” does *not* imply a subject “expressing” her state of mind by means of external gestures or features. A “gloomy expression”, a “serious expression” detected in a subject’s

³⁷ See Chapter 1.

³⁸ His critique of expression theories has been discussed in Sparshott (1982) and Robinson (2004).

facial features does not necessarily entail that the subject is sad or serious. That sad or gloomy expression may merely be the result of the face's physiognomy, which is expressive of gloom or seriousness, without implying the manifestation of any particular emotional state. The properties perceived in her face and countenance are what give the appearance of those emotions being underneath.³⁹

Kivy's example (1980) of the Saint Bernard dog's "sad expression" illustrates nicely this second option. It is not the case that the dog is sad, and that the face evinces its mental state; but that the dog's expressive features, or what Kivy calls the "contour," makes our perception of sadness possible. We cannot infer from its melancholic features, its wrinkled brow, sad eyes, drooping mouth and ears, the emotional state of the dog, but we can see its sad expression. The example used by Kivy could be extended to other facial features like that of the Basset Hound (Davies 1994), but also to non-animate objects like cars, clouds, trees etc. The important point of these examples is that being expressive of specific emotional features does not imply felt emotions.

I think that when we say a piece of music expresses an emotion the use of the term is that of "X-expression". Similarly, in fiction or in representational arts (painting, sculpture...) there is no prior emotional process, no one is feeling a real emotion that some external features betray. We attribute expression (in this second sense) to entities that could never express—in the transitive use of the term. The Saint Bernard's face is sad in virtue of some external facial properties. Similarly, a Debussy prelude is expressive of sadness in virtue of some outward musical features. This implies that what listeners may detect in music are the expressive properties of music and not somebody's mental state or representation of it. Expressive music "gives expression to an emotion" where

³⁹ Scruton appears at first to reject the idea that music has an identifiable expressive character and focuses on the idea that it is "expressive" simpliciter (1974: pp. 78-83), that music is expressive without expressing any particular emotion (the verb is used intransitively in music). In later works he seems to correct his point and admits that expressions like sadness can be identified in music, but without implying that anybody is feeling sad, and this is what he takes now as the intransitive sense (1997: p. 157-158).

a subject's beliefs or the intentional object of her feeling are absent. Were we on the right track, the next step should be to explain how it happens and to identify the musical elements that give music such an expressive power.

In conclusion, it seems to me that the nature of expression in music is not properly answered by an expression theory that appeals to the composer's or the performer's emotional state, neither by appealing to imagined characters, nor to the listener's emotive response. As O.K. Bouwsma has said, "the sadness is to music rather like the redness to the apple, than it is like the burp to the cider" (Bouwsma, 1950: 94). I take it that what is meant by that is that we perceive the music's expressiveness as part of its nature, as ascribing such an emotion to the music, and not as the property to dispose listeners to emotional responses.

Thus, music expressiveness cannot be explained in terms of occurrent emotions being manifested, but as a (musical) system that is impregnated with suggestions of emotion. I suggest that when we hear emotions in music, as emerging from the work, it is more appropriate to talk about music "exhibiting emotions" (X-expression) than music "expressing emotions" (expression of X). I think also that a clear distinction between the composer, the performer or the listener's emotions, on the one hand, and the emotions *in* the music, on the other, is crucial if we want to offer a good account of the expressive power of music, without mixing things up.⁴⁰

2.4. Literal or metaphoric?

We have concluded that being expressive of emotions does not entail someone manifesting her feelings, nor expressing emotions in the paradigmatic way of the verb "to express." That's why I think that *exhibiting* emotions satisfies better the way in which music manifests expressive features by means of musical elements. Music is expressive of an emotion by exhibiting this emotion, by

⁴⁰ See Chapter 1.

wearing the “appearance of emotion,” as Davies (1994) says.⁴¹ Now it’s time to look more closely at what is meant by that and which sort of listeners’ reaction corresponds to music expressiveness. In what follows, I will argue that when we say “this music is sad”, what is meant is exactly that it *is* sad and that what listeners perceive is precisely *how* it is sad.

Some authors have argued that the expression of emotions and emotive attributions to music are not to be taken literally. But this can be understood in different ways.⁴²

When the word “expression” is attributed to artworks, and especially to non-representational genres like music, we can understand it metaphorically. One argument for such a view is similar to that of “intelligibility”,⁴³ used by formalists to deny that absolute music is not able to express definite emotions. Recall that given that works of art are not sentient beings, and that emotional expression is mostly associated with those, the fact that we attribute such properties to artworks is, to say the least, problematic. Hanslick adduces the following in defense of the idea that the musically beautiful has to be found in its formal structure:

It is extraordinarily difficult to describe this specifically musical, autonomous beauty. Since music has no prototype in nature and expresses no conceptual content, it can be talked about only in dry technical definitions or with poetical fictions. (...). What in every other art is still description is in music already metaphor. (Hanslick 1986 [1891]: 30)

⁴¹ The main thesis of Stephen Davies in this work is that music “presents emotions’ characteristics in appearances.” (1994: 261). For further reading, see Chapter 5 of his work *Music and Meaning* (1994).

⁴² In Chapter 3 I present Sibley’s account of aesthetic terms. I discuss the point that he also picks out some words that we use metaphorically in aesthetic descriptions, for example, “melancholy,” “tightly-knit”, or “quasi-metaphors”, for example, “dynamic,” “balanced” (2004 [1959]: 128).

⁴³ Hanslick 1986 [1891] and Zangwill 2007, 2015 adopt this position.

More recently Nick Zangwill (2007, 2015) has argued that emotions, like other musical descriptions related to space, motion, time etc., are metaphorical. Describing natural phenomena in emotive terms, as we do, does not mean that nature is connected with emotions. Likewise, with music.

I have argued in the previous section that a broader notion of “expression” can accommodate also the expressiveness in fiction and in absolute music; and that it is also possible for something (say an artwork) to be expressive of an emotion even if we have no reason to suppose that an occurrent and felt emotion is being expressed by a sentient subject.

A somewhat different line was defended by Nelson Goodman in his seminal work *Languages of Art* (1968). Goodman analyses expression as a “metaphorical exemplification”. Ordinarily, metaphors are taken as figures of speech, as linguistic devices.⁴⁴ Goodman’s metaphorical exemplification suggests that being metaphoric is a feature of the way in which music possesses an emotive property. In other words, the possession of emotional character is metaphorical and music itself (not just the descriptions of it) is metaphoric.⁴⁵

There is also another sense in which attributions of expressiveness to music are regarded as figurative. An account along this line has been defended by Roger Scruton (1997). According to him our experience and description of music involves an elaborate system of metaphors, metaphors of space, movement and animation. We organize pitches according to thickness, volume, weight, color, dynamism and so on. Following that view, it is not only the emotive properties in music which fall under the figurative use but it is a great part of the “tonal surface” that is predicated metaphorically. Our experience of music has not only sound as its intentional object, but also “life and movement”, that music is situated by listeners in an imagined space (“the musical sphere”)

⁴⁴ This account is analyzed in length by Davies (1994: 123-166).

⁴⁵ For a deeper insight see Giovanelly (2016).

and organized in terms of their own experience (Scruton 1997: 96). Actually, we say the melody falls and rises, that the chords are open, hollow or filled, that the notes are higher or lower, that the texture of an instrument is thick or thin, that the rhythm is heavy or light, and that the passage is shining, silken, dark or sad.

However, I think that when we say that the initial glissando of Gershwin *Rhapsody in Blue* “lightly ascends,” that Ravel’s *Bolero*’s “thin textures” evolve into a crescendo, or that Mozart Minuets are “cheerful and gracious,” we mean exactly what the words describe. Having expressive terms “adopted” by music from their original contexts does not imply that they are now used metaphorically. Words acquire different uses and meanings and those evolve over time. Even if the primary uses of the terms “expression” and “sadness” are rooted in human behavior, it does not mean that when we ascribe expressive terms to music we are using metaphors. The same is true for movement and spatial ascription to music. Musical movement is not of the sort of a physical object that moves from one place to another (its primary use), but points to how sound events change along a temporal process. Not all non-primary uses of words are metaphoric.

In conclusion, I think musical descriptions in terms of motion, space or emotive expression have long ago entered into the musical vocabulary and their use is interpersonal, regular and cross-cultural.⁴⁶ So, I think that ascription of emotive terms to music is not metaphoric. When I say that “the music expresses sadness” it is not meant that the music feels sad but that it conveys a sad expression, the characteristic appearance of a sad person. This does not amount to denying that music can be described metaphorically. Describing Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue* clarinet glissando as the ascension and explosion of a wave in the ocean is a metaphorical description that can be unpacked and paraphrased. However, when we attribute sadness to Albinoni’s *Adagio* we point to a property of music that is literally heard as sad and cannot be conveyed in other

⁴⁶ I owe part of my critique of the metaphoric account of music’s expressive properties to Stephen Davies (1994) and Malcolm Budd (1985).

words without losing part of its meaning. So, I conclude that when we say emotive properties are in music, we do so in a literal sense.

2.5. “Hearing” emotions

My positive argument holds that music *does* have the necessary properties to explain its expressiveness, and that those are to be found *in* music. In other words, I claim that the emotions music is expressive of are properties of the work, properties that listeners recognize in the work and can be explained just by appealing to music. The challenge is to identify which sort of properties they are, and see how they do their work.

2.5.1. The redness of the apple

One way to explain how music’s emotional properties are perceived is to appeal to the analogy of color perception and argue that music’s emotive properties are like “the redness to the apple” (Bouwsma 1950) and that they are perceived as part of music’s nature. According to that, the sadness that we hear in music is a property of the music, in just the same way that the redness is a property of the apple.

The scientific account of colors in terms of wavelengths of the electromagnetic field that we experience as colored light is well known. It is also commonly recognised that there is a subjective part of color perception, and that the exposure of the seen object to light and how the brain reacts to the stimuli affect its perception, so color becomes something experienced by vision. They are secondary qualities⁴⁷ of objects, in the sense that they exist for the sense of “seeing.” But under normal human perceptual conditions and given

⁴⁷ The distinction between primary and secondary qualities of objects traces its roots back to the rise of modern science and is commonly attributed to John Locke (1959 [1870]). It is still an issue of much epistemological and metaphysical debate. I take for primary qualities of things the properties that are independent of observers; I take as secondary qualities of objects those that produce sensations in the perceiver, such as color, taste, smell or sound.

that the subject is not affected by any brain damage, colors are perceived as properties inherent to the object. That being so, it could be argued that emotive properties in music are part of the music in the same way colors are part of material physical objects.⁴⁸ That is as secondary properties that exist for the sense of “hearing.” In that case, we should also discover the “scientific” story behind the emotive properties in music and how they are related to our perception of them.

However, there is a notable difference between color perception and the perception of the emotive character of musical pieces. Imagine we are discussing the color of a blanket, and I want to convince you of its yellowness. I can compare the color of the blanket to other colors perceived in different objects and say “look, this dress is yellow too, a bit darker but still yellow; the yellowness of the blanket is brighter, but both objects share yellowness; and if you look with proper light you will realize that it is not in fact brown...”. There is no way to point at any quality in the object to justify my judgment about the yellowness of the blanket; there is no way to defend its yellowness appealing to features in the object. In this sense, colors are directly perceived as simple properties.

Imagine now that the blanket is exposed to sunlight for several days and the yellow color fades away. We now see the blanket as pale-brown or beige. From the point of view of physics changes occur in the primary properties of things and those internal changes have an effect in the perceptual experience of observers. One might be tempted then to describe in the Lockean sense that secondary properties such as colors are dispositional properties, that the blanket is yellow or pale-brown in virtue of its tendency to produce in the observer the experience of yellow or pale-brown. But note that such a disposition can be grounded in some structural features of the object (its physical properties). We can explain *how* it is that, before, the blanket looked

⁴⁸ I will leave aside the metaphysical debate over whether secondary qualities exist “in the object” or “in the mind” of the perceiver.

yellow, and now the color is shabby, and shows a different tonality to our senses. This explained by appealing to the physical changes that have occurred in the object. We might attribute the cause of color change to the radiation of sun light onto the blanket and the physical changes it causes in its atomic structure, but when I try to convince my interlocutor of its actual pale-brown color I still cannot point to any outward feature of the object that justifies my claim. This is the sense in which colors are simple properties.

When we ascribe emotive properties to music, things don't happen that way. Imagine now a discussion about the emotive properties of a piece of music. I am enthusiastic about the vitality, power and energy conveyed by the work. However, my friend perceives threat and danger in the same piece. The reasons for such disagreement can be diverse, but it could be the case that one of us has paid closer attention to the work, and captures details unnoticed to the other. Were this the case, we could try to persuade our interlocutor and point to features in the music that passed unnoticed by her, for example, an ascending figure, a particular motive, a cadence, a changing tonality in the final part ... Regardless of our success, and unlike in the case of colors, expressive features are present in music in virtue of other basic properties, properties to which we can always point at to identify where the emotive character of the piece comes from. This does not mean that, when we hear sadness or fear in a music work, we need to decipher consciously each little musical feature before we notice the emotion. We experience emotive properties directly, we hear them as inherent to it, similarly to how we see the colors as part of the object. But unlike in the case of colors we can point to those musical features to justify our perception and make other listeners realize their mistake .⁴⁹

⁴⁹ It is important also to notice that a small change in the composition, say another tonal resolution in the end of the piece, may change the emotive character of it.

2.5.2. Emotions in music

The conclusion extracted from the analogy of colors with musical emotive features is that both are experienced directly (no conscious analysis is needed); that neither of them corresponds to the notion of primary qualities (they depend on the perceiver); that in both cases we might be aware of the cause of a change occurred in the perceived object (the exposure to sunlight, or the tonal change). However, the yellowness of the blanket is not yellow in virtue of other qualities we perceive; and unlike with colors, in the case of music, its expressive properties can be explained by appealing to other features of music (formal or structural properties) on which they depend (the tonality, the timbre, the melody and so on). When I make a judgment about the emotive character of a music-work, I can always defend my claim pointing to specific features of details heard in it. Obviously, the more familiarity we have with technical musical vocabulary, the easier it will be to detect such features, and make a convincing defense against an interlocutor.

In this sense emotive properties of music are complex properties that result from the combination of different musical features and elements. When emotive properties such as melancholy, cheerfulness and the like are detected in a music piece, we perceive them directly, without necessarily being aware of the features in virtue of which they are melancholic or cheerful. But the fact that music embodies such character, depends on the combination of musical formal features that are singled out in that specific work. One slight alteration in a section of the work, might carry with it a change in the emotive character, and a different perceptual experience of it. From an exactly identical combination of musical elements, should emerge the same emotive character in a work. But obviously perceiving a similar emotional tone in two different music pieces does not mean that they share the same musical features. Chopin's *Tristesse* (independently of its title) shows melancholy very differently to Albinoni's *Adagio* or to the *Seven Symphony's* slow movement of Beethoven. As

I said, music offers infinite possibilities and very varied ways of exhibiting an expressive color.

Despite the dependence of music's emotive qualities on other more technical musical features, we hear them as distinct qualities, separated from those features that give reason to them. They are the kind of qualities one may call "emergent" from a whole, and "supervenient"⁵⁰ on the way such a whole is composed and structured. The idea is that emotions in music are nothing more than heard properties inherent to it, and that we hear them as salient and distinct features, but that they are anchored to underlying first-level musical features, and cannot be explained without pointing to those first-level features. Expressiveness then should be understood as a phenomenal property of music itself, that resides in the way the music sounds to the attuned listener, and, as I will argue, that she experiences the music in that way thanks to the resemblance of ordinary emotional behavior and music's dynamic appearance.⁵¹

So, I don't think that the emotive character that music emanates depends on its propensity to elicit emotions in the listener, or that its expressiveness can be explained by appealing to any imagined content. When such emotions arise, or music directs our thought towards an imagined persona possessing those emotions, or even when music evokes personal recreations of our emotive life, the cause of all those responses would remain unexplained. The proposal I have already outlined takes a cognitivist perspective on music's expressiveness, which I think focuses *on the root* of music's expressive power and associated human affect responses. As we said, music's expressive properties are heard,

⁵⁰ The term "supervenience" was first introduced to describe a physicalist and non-reductive approach to philosophy of mind. Davidson takes it to mean that "there cannot be two events alike in all physical respects but differing in some mental aspects, or that an object cannot alter in some mental respect without altering in some physical respects" (Davidson 1980 [1970]: 214). I develop this idea in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4.

⁵¹ The issue about the dependence of emotive properties on first-level musical features will be picked up in Chapter 4. The argument for a resemblance account of music expressiveness is developed in Chapter 5.

cognized and recognized as aspects of music, and there are two basic reasons why they can be rightly explained as something inherent to it.

First, the reason I just pointed out is that music has the power to embody what we perceive as emotive features. This power is to be found in its genuine musical machinery, the dimensions in which a sound event is shaped, and the features that “give life” to it. Harmony, rhythm and melody are the fundamental aspects of music, but timbre, dynamics, tempo, loudness, brightness etc. will also give character to the work, or to passages of it.⁵² There is a relationship between the emergent emotive properties of music and the features that ground such phenomena, a relation I am confident that can be explained. Given that music is a temporal art, its expressive character does not need to be found in a particular moment, figure or passage. Often the expressive character will be revealed only gradually, after we hear how different passages are articulated into the whole structure.

Secondly, the composer is aware of such potential, and thanks to her competence as a musician, she knows which formal combinations can result in the intended emotive features. The author uses her technical abilities to give expressiveness to her work. If successful, she chooses the appropriate elements and combines them in such a fashion that creates a work of a particular expressive character. The composer’s expertise and skill allows thereafter the attentive listener to recognize the salient emotive features of the music-work and thus infer the author’s intention in this respect.

So music is not expressive because it makes us happy, or moves us profoundly, or because it activates emotive remembrances or anything of that kind. Maybe being expressive can have secondary and often pleasurable effects on us; we could also admit that sometimes those effects facilitate a better understanding of the work; and also that those “side effects” are often the reason why we listen to music. But the point is that without all that, music

⁵² I take up this issue in Chapter 5/6

remains expressive. Its expressive capacity lies within itself and the merit in the composer's ability.

In chapter I argued that the expressiveness of music was to be found *in* music, as something inherent to it, which owes its power to the sound event and its properties, independently of what the composer or the listener feel. We saw that music has the ability of showing some characteristically emotional features by purely musical means and that the composer, aware of such power, makes use of it to provide her work with a particular emotive character. As a consequence, listeners "hear emotions" in music, or better perceive such emotive qualities in it. They detect what the author (if successful) intended to present by musical means. What is heard is not someone manifesting felt emotions, but a complex and structured sound event; and what is perceived as emotive is nothing else but a salient feature of such sound event.

Now, if we accept that music exhibits emotions in this way, we should find the properties in virtue of which a musical work is expressive of specific emotions; in other words, explain how emotions "get into the music." The paradigmatic example I used for what I called "X expression", the air of sadness exhibited in the Saint Bernard dog's face, is explained by appealing to the physical features we observe in its face, glance and gesture. They are detectable, observable, and identifiable by sight. We could argue that we identify those features as expressive of sadness because they simulate or look like human sad faces. Whether this parallelism between ordinary expressions of emotion and music exhibiting emotion is enough grounds or not to explain how listeners attribute emotional properties to music will be discussed later.

Whether this account of emotions in non-human cases in terms of resemblance to human expression is adequate or not, it seems particularly difficult in the case of music. The two main difficulties are:

- 1) In music, there is no obvious gesture, gait, or visual feature to be identified as expressive of any particular emotion, there is just sound. There is

no obvious parallelism between sound's external features and the those exhibited in full-blooded emotional responses.

2) Following on from on 1), we are presented with the cross-modal problem: we would have to explain how structured sound is able to *resemble* the appearance of features detected by sight (body movements, gaits, gestures and so on).

In any case, the explanation, I insist, is to be found in the musical work and its machinery and not outside it. The challenge now is to find an account that answers *how* the formal features of music and its emotive aspects are related and show how they are capable of exhibiting the emotional properties we hear in music. As we said before, the difficulty lies in explaining “*how* emotions get into the music.” Before addressing that, let's outline the sort of emotive properties music can exhibit.

2.6. Which emotions?

When we say that a piece of music is expressive we might mean two different things.

First, we sometimes quite naturally describe a music-work, or a performance of it, as expressive, without necessarily implying that a particular emotive character is detected in the piece. “Expression” in this intransitive sense does not mean expression of any emotion in particular, but a general feature attributed to the work. The same work can be performed more or less expressively then, even if there is no particular emotive property detected in it.

I recall my music student days when our piano teacher gave us instructions for a correct performance of a score. When we interpreted romantic music, the general command was to play *espressivo* (playing Bach was a completely different matter, the use of the sustain pedal was forbidden and everything had to be meticulously and very cleanly executed). We understood that we had to

convey an emotive character in our performance of a Beethoven Sonata, or a Chopin Nocturne, for example, and expression marks like *appassionato*, *con fuoco*, *afetuoso*, *misterioso* or *dolcissimo* helped in our task. We were conscious that it should be played “with feeling”, not necessarily the sort of feeling detected in one’s bowels, but avoiding a cold, distant or too technical performance. I still experience that as a listener of music when I attend a concerto, or compare different recordings of the same work; and my own execution of a piece of music or song can vary in expressiveness from one moment to another, either when I play the piano as a soloist or rehearse with my band. Compare Chopin’s *Ballad No. 1.*, played by Lang Lang, and by Christian Zimmerman,⁵³ with all my respect for both of them. It is not because Zimmerman expresses melancholy more appropriately that his performance is more expressive. Despite appearances, the subtlety and delicacy of Zimmerman execution is what gives the performance an expressive character, which is not to do with this or that specific emotion, but with being more (or less) *espressivo* in a general way.

Second, when we attribute expressiveness to a work or performance we may be suggesting that a particular mood, emotion or affect is detected in the music-work; as we argued, it is not an ocurrent mood or emotion, but the outward features of the music-work that characterize the expression of emotions in ordinary emotional experience. In this sense, we may describe a music piece as melancholic, gloomy, dramatic or joyous, and according to the cognitivist account I defend, we do so because emotive properties that coincide with such descriptions are perceived in the music work.

The account of music expressiveness I will defend is based on the idea that music’s expressive properties are detected and heard as expressive of emotions thanks to the resemblance perceived between central cases of emotional expression (sounds, movements, etc.) and the way music presents its dynamic

⁵³ See <https://youtu.be/I6B9Maiuik4> for Lang Lang and <https://youtu.be/RR7eUSFsn28> for Zimmerman.

features. I have already explained that not all affective states have distinctive physiological and behavioral characteristics. That's why the emotions music can be expressive of, should be restricted to those that show some characteristic outward manifestations in ordinary emotional experiences. It is common to describe a piece of music as sad, joyful, fearful and the like; but it is most unlikely that we perceive envy, hate, jealousy, shame, piety, dignity or pride in them.

The first group of emotions are what we could take as primary emotions. Some authors suggest that emotions like fear, joy, sadness or anger appeared early in our evolutionary history, that they are innate and pre-organized. They are also the first emotions that a child experiences and learns to identify in others. (e.g. Damasio 1997) In general they can be characterized by two main features:

1) Their outward expression is easily recognizable. In other words, they conform to standard behavioral responses. One may recognize a sad expression in a human face, in a weeping pillow, in a creature's face and movement, or even in inanimate objects such as clouds or cars. We don't need to be aware of the subject's feelings or her mental states to work out that what she displays is an expression of sadness. That being the case, this characteristic matches with the way in which music is expressive.

2) They respond to a "pre-organized" set of bodily reactions that we recognize in some musical features and associate thereafter with those emotions. For example, trembling, goose-bumps, or weakened limbs are ordinarily the physiological reactions associated with fear. If music, in virtue of its musical elements and dimensions is able to display the appearance of such bodily reactions, emotions of this sort can be recognized in music. Obviously, there is nobody feeling fear or rage behind, but what music exhibits, as I insisted, is the outward appearance of such emotions.

The second group of emotions is what Moravcsik (1982) called "platonic attitudes" and which I will refer to as "higher emotions" or secondary emotions.

They are distinguished because of several things; some of them are not relevant to the issue at hand (viz. the emotions music can be expressive of), while others, I think, are key to understanding how music can be expressive of some kinds of emotion, and not others.

Higher emotions normally involve complex cognitive content, not only contextual-background information. Propositional attitudes, for instance, are likely to be involved in emotions such as shame or pride. Furthermore, they normally imply an intentional object towards which they are directed. But the principal reason why absolute music cannot be attributed to these sorts of emotion as expressive properties inherent to it (without appealing to lyrics, plots or extra-musical narrative content), is the absence of a distinctive behavioral pattern in it. One could object that some of those “platonic attitudes” have acquired distinctive behavioral patterns. But be that as it may, those would conform more to conventions depending on culture, education etc., than to something attributable to music itself.

In chapter 1 I highlighted the importance of the feeling components in human emotions, of the bodily reactions that emotive experiences cause in the subject, and also the importance of the way that ordinarily felt emotions are externalized, expressed via gestures, facial expression, voice modulation, gait, carriage, etc.. I also clarified that moods, which many times lack an intentional object, an “aboutness,” and are more general than emotions (in the narrow sense), share with their analogue emotions behavioral and feeling components (sadness with melancholic mood; joy with cheerful mood, for instance).

My hypothesis is that the emotions perceived in music are those that being primary emotions like sadness, joy, fear or anger, can be presented in a non-specific form, and that because of that they share outward features with corresponding mood states. We don't merely perceive a fearful expression as a property inherent to music, but also the tension, the instability, the turbulence or nervousness associated with such emotion. Music has not only the power to present emotions in their appearance to listeners, but also many other features

that we associate with feelings and emotive experiences in general. A collection of qualities like being tranquil, vivid, agitated, energetic, somber, or garish (among many others) that composers consciously play with to give music its expressive character. I think that the richness of music's expressiveness lies here, in its power to exhibit what I take as feeling or emotive components. I think that attempts to justify the capacity of music to express a broad range of human emotions surpass the boundaries of what is purely musical; and there is no need for that.

This is just a short anticipation of something I will deal with in the next chapter. For present purposes, I just wanted to point to the fact that when emotions are attributed to music, and if we refer to those that are found *in* music, we must realize that the list of full-blooded emotions that music can be expressive of is quite restricted. In contrast the emotive components and other expressive properties that music is able to present is extensive and rich.

Chapter 3

3. Aesthetic properties of artworks

To describe something in aesthetic terms is to describe it; but it is to savor it at the same time: to run it over your tongue and lick your lips; to “investigate” its pleasurable possibilities (Kivy 1975: 210)

The aim of this chapter is to explain what aesthetic properties are, to prepare the soil for further inquiries into music and its properties that makes such investigations so rich and fruitful. Before that, however, we have a preliminary task to accomplish. We will need to clarify a few things and travel back to the origins of aesthetics and the philosophy of art. In the second half of the chapter, I analyze critically Sibley’s account of “aesthetic concepts” and present my picture of aesthetic properties, that will work as the basis of my account of music.

3.1. The boundaries of aesthetics

The term “aesthetics” is often linked to the beauty found in artworks, but not exclusively. We can have an aesthetic experience, that is an experience of beauty, contemplating a natural landscape, smelling a perfume, listening to the night-time sounds of the forest, observing a quotidian scene or just looking at a beautiful human face. Something seems to be beautiful not because it provides

a material benefit or profit, but because it is valuable for its own sake; because just contemplating it, how it appears to us, we feel pleased, gratified and satisfied. It seems that the aesthetic deals with what “appears” to us, with what is seen, heard, noticed or felt.

This is just an intuitive approach to “aesthetics.” If we are on the right path, an aesthetic property should be the kind of feature in the object (in the landscape, in the daily scene, in the beautiful face) that contributes to the aesthetic appreciation of the object. The intense blue that is perceived at the bottom of the sea; the fresh smell of a perfume; the background silence of the woods; the geometrical composition of the family members on a countryside picnic; the serene countenance of an old woman’s face ... All of them could be examples of aesthetic properties given the appropriate circumstances.

But we are not dealing with forests, families or perfumes. Our subject is art and particularly music. What interests me first is to define what aesthetic properties of artworks are, to clarify what gives something its aesthetic value, what makes such features deserving of aesthetic appreciation at such. And also, to decide the relevance that different types of aesthetic properties have when we praise or criticize a work of art.

However, this is not enough if we aim to find the place that emotive, and other emotive-like, properties occupy among the aesthetic properties, and their relevance for its artistic appreciation. We will have to draw attention to different types of properties of artworks, and find and discuss the criteria that classify them. We will find in Sibley (2004 [1959]) a rich source of inspiration. The plan of this work, however, is to go a bit further and offer a picture where music expressive properties, and other aesthetic properties close to them, fit.

It is crucial though that we first clarify the meaning of “aesthetic” and define afterwards its boundaries, before entering into the particularities of music. Let’s begin from its roots.

3.2. Roots: aesthetics and taste

Etymologically the adjective “aesthetic” (*aisthētikós* in Greek) means “of sense perception,” linked to the outward appearance of something, to what is perceived by the senses. However, the use of “aesthetic” applied to several nouns and also “aesthetics” as a philosophical discipline are relatively young. Many centuries before, back in Ancient Greece, Plato and Aristotle wrote about aesthetic matters, discussed philosophically music, poetry tragedy, but they didn’t coin the term “aesthetic” in regard to artworks.

It is in the 18th century that a regular use of those terms is introduced, and also when “aesthetics”, as a branch of philosophy, acquires its place and autonomy. In his *Critique of Pure Reason* (1950 [1781]) Kant was not confident about the nascent philosophical discipline. This excerpt shows his scepticism:

The Germans are the only people who currently make use of the word “aesthetic” in order to signify what others call the critique of taste. This usage originated in the abortive attempt made by Baumgarten, that admirable analytic thinker, to bring the critical treatment of the beautiful under rational principles, and so to raise its rules to the rank of a science. But such endeavors are fruitless. The said rules or criteria are, as regards their chief sources, merely empirical, and consequently can never serve as determinate a priori laws by which our judgment of taste must be directed. (Kant 1950 [1781]: 66n)

Baumgarten (1954 [1735]: 78) did not invent “aesthetics” as a subject, but coined the term in 1735 and gave it a place in his treatises and lectures. He defined “aesthetics” as “the science of perception”, consistent with its original Greek meaning. Rationalizing aesthetics and freeing it from the empirical, as German tradition intended, seemed a hopeless matter to Kant though, too far from the *a priori* principles that all respected philosophy should follow. However, Hutcheson’s British tradition placed aesthetics and moral philosophy in the empirical realm. Paradoxical as it may seem, Kant changed his mind and published shortly after his *Critique of Judgment* (2008 [1790]). It was afterwards,

that the term “aesthetics” acquired a broader dimension and definitively took its place in the philosophical world.⁵⁴

Much more recently, in the middle of the 20th century there didn’t seem to be much hope for philosophy of art and beauty, or taste either. Logical positivism and philosophy of language did not help, and relegated those issues to the realm of “the emotive.”⁵⁵ Thanks to Nelson Goodman’s *Languages of Art* (1968), philosophy of art and aesthetics recovered its health and flourished with renewed energy.

There is a concept that in the last three centuries has been linked to aesthetic matters: the faculty of taste, generally understood as a special sort of human ability or aesthetic sensibility. Originally connected to culinary matters, back in the seventeenth century taste was associated with an ability to evaluate (Bouhours 1960 [1971]). Hutcheson and other British followers speculated about that “internal sense” (Hutcheson 2004 [1725]), analogous to the five senses, fitted for the perception of beauty. Soon after that, it began to be linked with aesthetic value theories.

First theories of taste came with Hume, Reid and Kant in the eighteenth century,⁵⁶ and it became a faculty of evaluation of special aesthetic properties of artworks (say beauty or goodness), a faculty separated from reason.

⁵⁴ For further information about the first steps of Modern Aesthetics see Guyer (2004).

⁵⁵ John Passmore (1959) in “The Dreariness of Aesthetics,” and Stuart Hampshire (1959) in “Logic and Appreciation” are examples of this condemnatory attitude towards aesthetics matters. They regarded aesthetics as a function-less discipline, without any clear subject matter.

⁵⁶ Reid could be regarded as an aesthetic realist (Kivy 2015, Zangwill 2015). In contrast to Hume and Kant, he believed that *beauty* is a property of the objects we call “beautiful,” and that when “beautiful” is tagged to an object, we believe it is.

There is undoubtedly a judgment in every operation of taste. In the perception of beauty, for instance, there is not only a sensation of pleasure but a real judgment concerning the excellence of the object. It is the same in poetry, painting, eloquence, and music, &c.” (Reid 1973 [1937])

In “Of the Standard of Taste” (1997 [1759]), Hume argues for the mind-dependence of beauty, and presents a subjectivist position, claiming that beauty is not a quality of things.

Beauty is no quality in things themselves: It exists merely in the mind which contemplates them; and each mind perceives a different beauty. One person may even perceive deformity, here another is sensible of beauty; and every individual ought to acquiesce in his own sentiment, without pretending to regulate those of others. (1997 [1759]: 352))

According to him, the nature of pleasure upon beautiful things is a matter of sentimental reactions, and taste a kind of “internal sense”, a secondary one, which unlike the five external senses, depends upon antecedent perceptions.

However, he avoids extreme subjectivism, admitting that often there is no doubt about which artwork is better, or which artist is better. Defending that Milton is not better than Ogilby entails comparing what is not comparable at all. The foundation of general principles, as in practical sciences, is a posteriori, which means that those general principles are to be discovered through experience, “concerning what has been universally found to please in all countries and in all ages” (Hume 1997 [1759]: 353). It is important his idea that, as soon as personal sentiments and views are involved, the judgment is perverted, and the critic’s taste loses all credit. That’s why he highlights the importance of proper judgment of artworks.⁵⁷ So the true judge in the fine arts should be someone with “strong sense, united to delicate sentiment, improved by practice, perfected by comparison, and cleared of all prejudice...” (Hume 1997 [1759]: 360). This joint verdict is what Hume takes as the true standard of taste.

In the *Critique of Judgment*, Kant offers his analysis of the beautiful. Like Hume, he takes *subjectivity* as the first condition of judgments of taste, and defines beautiful as “which apart from concepts, is represented as the object of a

⁵⁷ This idea of the true standard of taste is an influence on Kant, and more recently also Hanslick and Kivy. I will pick up this issue when we enter into the aesthetics of music.

universal delight” (Kant 2008 [1790]: 24). Beautiful then is what generates a pleasurable feeling in us, but the nature of this pleasure (or pure judgments of taste) can only be properly understood in contrast to judgments of the agreeable.

The agreeable, the beautiful, and the good thus denote three different relations of representations to the feeling of pleasure and displeasure (...). The agreeable is what GRATIFIES US; the beautiful what simply PLEASES us; the good what is ESTEEMED (approved) ... (Kant 2008 [1790]: 41)

Pure judgments of taste require us to take distance, to look at them impartially, in a disinterested way, as “free delight.” We judge things as beautiful independently of whether they serve our personal interest or not. But here comes the second condition of judgments of taste: *universality*. Beautiful things are not beautiful just *to me*, but to everyone else too. The nature of pleasure of beautiful objects is special: they please us because they *must* please everybody else too. We take our pleasure as in necessary relation to the object that elicits it. That’s why people speak of beautiful as a property of things and not a personal reaction to them, with a ground common to all (Kant 2008 [1790]: §19).

According to Peter Kivy (1973), the next move of the notion of taste, was from its original realm of appreciation and evaluation of objects, to the realm of aesthetic perception. i.e. the ability to notice the qualities— not just goodness or badness— of aesthetic objects. And this is where we are now.

So, the terminology of taste we deal with in our discussion doesn’t point to our personal liking or preference, nor are we dealing with just appraisals about the goodness or badness of an object (as in ordinary language we may do); taste terms point to the properties we perceive in an artwork *qua* artwork such as being “delicate,” “elegant,” “balanced,” “somber” and so on. The notion of taste I will deal with here is one that involves discernment, sensitivity and criteria to appreciate what counts as relevant and what does not.

3.3. Philosophy of art and aesthetics

It is important to make a clear distinction between the properties that artworks may possess *qua artworks*, and the aesthetic properties, which are a subset of the former. To put it simply, not all artistic properties count as aesthetic; but the aesthetic properties of an artwork, among the others, count for its overall evaluation.

Statements like “*Apocalypse Now* is a good film” belong to the artistic evaluation of artworks. Behind such assertion we may be appraising different aspects of the film, the photography, the beauty of Vietnam landscapes, the special effects of the war scenes, Wagner’s *Valkyries* in the background while American soldiers bomb civilians, how the plot is structured, the story, the interpretation of the characters, the originality, its moral message, the supremacy of America, the climax scenes, its historic value or its commercial success (among many others). Some of those aspects may be artistically relevant, while others may not; and some of those aspects point to aesthetic features of the film while others refer to non-aesthetic features of the film. We can see that evaluating an artwork is a challenging task and implies weighing up many different things.

While philosophy of art deals with the recognition, appreciation or criticism of artworks (for which *all* art-relevant properties count), aesthetics is the philosophical investigation into the nature of art, beauty and taste. I take *art-relevant* properties of a work to be those that we appreciate in it *qua artwork*, those we take into account to praise or criticize the work aesthetically. In this work, I assume the distinction between the *aesthetic art-relevant* properties, and the rest, which I call *non-aesthetic art-relevant* properties.⁵⁸ This is important to keep in mind, especially if the artistic genre we are discussing is absolute music. It is important then to sharply distinguish between questions aesthetic properties of artworks, and questions about other sort of artistic

⁵⁸ I owe to Peter Kivy most of these conceptual and terminological distinctions.

properties, and keep in mind that aesthetic ones are a subclass of the artistic realm.

I draw also on Kivy's distinction between the interpretation, the analysis and the evaluation of artworks (2015).⁵⁹ I call "interpretation" that which deals with the non-aesthetic art-relevant properties of artworks and involves the spelling out of meaning of the work; "analysis," to what deals with aesthetic art-relevant properties of artworks; and "evaluation," to the appraisal of the artistic merit or demerit of it. Thus, when an artwork is evaluated, the critic may consider elements that belong to the aesthetic realm exclusively or to other non-aesthetic features that add (or subtract) value to the work.⁶⁰

Back to the example of the movie, the critic may appraise various aspects of it before reaching an evaluative conclusion. She may point to some aesthetic features, at how the photography of the film captures the beauty of Vietnam landscapes, at the special effects of the war scenes or to the sublimity of Wagner's *Valkyries* in the background, and conclude that it is a good movie. The critic could adopt a different view though, and point to the imperialistic moral behind the film, to its blockbuster character and the implicit patriotic North-American message, and shift the balance in favor of its artistic vices. In this case the artistic demerits prevail, whereas in the former the critic highlights the aesthetic features of the film to reach a more favorable conclusion.

I take the aesthetic properties of an artwork as those qualities in the work that contribute to its aesthetic value and enjoyment (positive, negative or neutral). The problem with this definition is that it brings us to a never-ending pinball: we need then to define "aesthetic value," then "aesthetic judgment,"

⁵⁹ The term "analysis" is borrowed from the musical academic vocabulary, which originally consists in elucidating the formal structure of musical work. It is the technique that music students in conservatories learn and practice, applying music-theory skills to the elucidation of a score or to a heard instance of it. It is also a helpful way to approach a work as a performer, to make a good reading of it, in other words to understand better how the composer intended her work to be played.

⁶⁰ In fact, in cases of disagreement about art, there is often confusion about the various dimensions of the discussion: analysis, interpretation or evaluation. See Kivy (2015) for further reading on this issue.

then “aesthetic property” again. So, we’d better define aesthetic properties pointing at what qualifies them: according to my understanding, they are structural and phenomenological properties of the work; sensuous features for which recognition by a special sensibility or taste is required. This ability might be somehow above the basic perceptual capacities of a person, but it is not exclusive to a few privileged ones. So as far as I see it “the aesthetic” refers to the perceptual and phenomenological properties that are contemplated in the object.⁶¹

3.4. Aesthetics’ close friends

Whatever the scope of “aesthetic” might be thought to be, it is predicated of a wide range of things. We talk about “aesthetic experience,” “aesthetic pleasure,” “aesthetic value” and so on. I think that at this point it will be useful to give some definitions and try to clarify concepts that will appear later in this work.⁶²

It is important to distinguish, first, two types of statements about artworks, aesthetic judgments and aesthetic (or artistic) appraisals.⁶³ By an “aesthetic judgment” I mean an utterance or declarative sentence of the form “X is φ ”, where “ φ ” denotes an aesthetic property of X. Aesthetic judgements belong to the analysis of the artwork.

By “aesthetic (or artistic) appraisals” I mean statements of the form “X is ψ ” where “ ψ ” is a purely evaluative predicate such as “beautiful” (or “ugly”) and “good” (or “bad”). Appraisals belong to the evaluation of artworks, and the predicate (“ ψ ”) behaves in a purely evaluative way. The evaluation can be purely

⁶¹ I hold here to Kivy’s usage of “aesthetic”, where he defines it as “the “sensuous”, “phenomenological”, structural, and (perhaps) emotive properties of artworks, in contrast to their narrative and other “content.” (Kivy 2011: 14.) A notion that reminds us of the classic form and content distinction, that would correspond to aesthetic properties and non-aesthetic properties.

⁶² It is important to note that those definitions are controversial, but I’ll not try to justify all of them.

⁶³ See Kivy (2015) and Korta (forthcoming).

aesthetic, that is to say, an evaluation that takes into account only the aesthetic properties of the artwork (in other words, its analysis); or it can be an *artistic* evaluation, which takes into account the non-aesthetic but art-relevant properties, that is, the interpretation of the artwork. If you think that there is nothing else to the value of an artwork than its aesthetic merit, you don't need the distinction: aesthetic and artistic appraisal would be exactly the same. If you think, as I do, that there are non-aesthetic but art-relevant properties, you should distinguish between aesthetic and artistic appraisals.

3.5. Sibley's heritage

With his ground-breaking paper "Aesthetic Concepts" (2004 [1959]), Frank Sibley paved the way for the contemporary philosophical discussion on aesthetic properties. He did not offer an explicit definition of what aesthetic properties are, but he provided lots of insights about aesthetic properties and their relation with non-aesthetic properties. My point here is not to discuss in depth his arguments, but to get somewhat clearer about aesthetic properties and the predicates we use to denote them. Let's have a look at his proposal.

Sibley distinguishes two broad groups among the remarks we make about artworks. The first group includes "non-aesthetic terms" and the second one what he calls "aesthetic concepts" or "aesthetic terms". In the following passage, he introduces non-aesthetic features of artworks. He writes:

We say that a novel has a great number of characters and deals with life in a manufacturing town; that a painting uses pale colors, predominantly blues and greens, and has kneeling figures in the foreground; that the theme in a fugue is inverted at such a point and that there is a stretto at the close; that the action of a play takes place in the span of one day and that there is a reconciliation scene in the fifth act. Such remarks may be made by, and such features pointed out to, anyone with normal eyes, ears, and intelligence. (Sibley 2004 [1959]: 127)

These are remarks that, according to Sibley, “anyone with normal eyes, ears, and intelligence” can make (2004 [1959]: 127) and detect; as far as I interpret his words, they do not require any special faculty or sensibility, just the simple capacity of perception or discernment.⁶⁴ In contrast, “aesthetic concepts,” require “the exercise of taste, perceptiveness, or sensibility, of aesthetic discrimination or appreciation” (2004 [1959]: 127).⁶⁵

He defines aesthetic concepts as follows:

On the other hand, we also say that a poem is tightly-knit or deeply moving; that a picture lacks balance, or has a certain serenity and repose, or that the grouping of figures sets up an exciting tension; that the characters in a novel never really come to life, or that a certain episode strikes a false note. (Sibley 2004 [1959]: 127)

⁶⁴ In footnote 1 (2004 [1959]: 139), Sibley clarifies two important things. One, that he speaks about “aesthetic terms” but acknowledges that it would be more correct to speak of its *use*. The other one, that he refers to the first group of words, features, concepts as simply “non-aesthetic” because none of the predicates other writers have used to refer to them (“natural,” “observable,” “perceptual,” “physical,” “objective” (qualities), “neutral,” “descriptive” (language)) is really apt for his purpose. Whether he discards those features as characteristics of “non-aesthetic terms” is not clear. I don’t think we should interpret his words in this sense. However, I think that some of those predicates reflect quite naturally the characteristics of Sibley’s “non-aesthetic terms”.

⁶⁵ Whether Sibley in his 2004 [1959] takes aesthetic properties as strictly perceptual or not is not clear enough. In his 1965 essay “Aesthetic and Non-Aesthetic” his idea is more explicit:

It is important to note first that, broadly speaking, aesthetics deals with a kind of perception (emphasis mine) People have to *see* the grace or unity of a work, *hear* the plaintiveness or frenzy in the music, *notice* the gaudiness of a colour scheme, feel the power of a novel, its mood, or its uncertainty of tone. They may be struck by these qualities at once, or they may come to perceive them only after repeated viewings, hearings, or readings, and with the help of critics. But unless they do perceive them for themselves, aesthetic enjoyment, appreciation, and judgement are beyond them. Merely to learn from others, on good authority, that the music is serene, the play moving, or the picture unbalanced is of little aesthetic value; the crucial thing is to see, hear, or feel. To suppose indeed that one can make aesthetic judgements without aesthetic perception, say, by following rules of some kind, is to misunderstand aesthetic judgement. (Sibley 2001 [1965]: 34)

Kivy (2001b: 18) interprets Sibley’s “perceptual” attribution to aesthetic properties more like an *epistemic* claim rather than an *ontological* presupposition, meaning that by “perceived” is meant how we experience it “the aesthetic” more than “how it is”.

These are that sort of judgments that require “the exercise of taste, perceptiveness, or sensibility, of aesthetic discrimination or appreciation;” understanding taste as “an ability to *notice* or *see* or *tell* that things have certain qualities” (Sibley 2004 [1959]: 127-128). Terms like “unified,” “balanced,” “integrated,” “lifeless,” “serene,” “somber,” “dynamic,” “powerful,” “vivid,” “delicate,” “moving,” “trite,” “sentimental,” or “tragic,” constitute Sibley’s (2004 [1959]: 127) initial list of aesthetic concepts.⁶⁶

This list does not only contain adjectives, but also expressions including “telling contrast,” “sets up tension,” “conveys a sense of,” “holds it together.” He also includes adjectives that have mainly an exclusive aesthetic use, like “graceful,” “delicate,” “dainty,” “handsome,” “comely,” “elegant,” “garish,” “lovely,” “pretty,” or “beautiful,” with others that, depending on the context, work as aesthetic expressions or not. He also points at other adjectives that are seldom used as aesthetic terms, examples of which are “red,” “square,” “docile,” “evanescent,” and “intelligent.” He also thinks that sometimes we press into aesthetic service words which do not primarily function in this manner, and make a metaphorical transference.⁶⁷ Examples of this kind, according to him, are “dynamic,” “melancholy,” “balanced,” and “tightly-knit;” however he concedes some of them have acquired their place in aesthetic contexts and are now recognized as “standard vocabulary of that language” (Sibley 2004 [1959]: 128).

We can see that Sibley makes a clear distinction here between what he takes as “non-aesthetic” and “aesthetic” properties of artworks. The latter require the exercise of taste, for which discernment and appreciation this

⁶⁶ In Sibley’s “Aesthetic Concepts”, the ontological and linguistic level (properties and terms) are sometimes entangled; it is neither clear whether those “aesthetic concepts” refer to properties, propositions or words. My interest is about the ontology of aesthetic features, but the arguments require an appeal to the linguistic category too.

⁶⁷ I discuss about the literalness or metaphoric use of aesthetic terms in chapter 2.

special sort of sensitivity is required. This could be discussed.⁶⁸ But the most controversial point is that he takes aesthetic concepts to be “non-condition governed.”⁶⁹ His argument is as follows.

We often apply aesthetic terms (which require the exercise of taste) to artworks, and justify their use by mentioning other aesthetic terms or by pointing at features that do not depend upon taste. For example, we say it is “*dainty* because of the *delicacy* and harmony of its coloring” (the first case) or “*delicate* because of its pastel shades and curving lines,”⁷⁰ (Sibley 2004 [1959: 128]); being “delicate” an aesthetic term and the “pastel shades” and “curving lines” non-aesthetic terms that denote non-aesthetic features of the object. In any case, we point at something to justify our ascription, which shows that aesthetic terms are applied because they depend upon other features that are, he says, “visible, audible, or otherwise discernible without any exercise of taste of sensibility,” i.e. upon “non-aesthetic” features.

But whatever kind of dependence relation we find, “there are no non-aesthetic features which serve in *any* circumstances as logically *sufficient conditions* for applying aesthetic terms” (Sibley 2004 [1959]: 128). In other words, we can’t find necessary nor sufficient features that warrant the application of a particular aesthetic term. Neither can we, he argues, point at a number of *relevant features* or *conditions* such that some combination of them would be enough to apply the aesthetic term. In contrast to “aesthetic concepts” there are other sort of terms, for example “possessive,” “capricious,” or “intelligent,” for which such conditions might be found. Even if those relevant features (or conditions) might not be *sufficient* alone to justify the application of a term, when they are combined with other similar features they carry some weight for

⁶⁸ Indeed, I construe the group of aesthetic properties of artworks broader than him and (as I will argue later) include Sibley’s “non-aesthetic” properties among the aesthetic ones too.

⁶⁹ Kivy discusses thoroughly this idea in *Speaking of Art* (1973) and other works (1975, 1979). Unfortunately, I cannot discuss the issue here.

⁷⁰ Emphasis mine.

the ascription of the property to the object. The prototype example used by Sibley is that of “intelligence.” Being a good chess player alone or being able to understand Gödel’s proof alone, may not warrant intelligence, but count to add force to that statement about an individual. In the case of aesthetic properties, however, there is no such possibility, according to Sibley. He allows, that at best, some features count only *characteristically* in one particular direction (for example, lightness, lack of intense colors and so on count typically towards delicacy, and not against), but that no group of them is ever logically sufficient. So aesthetic concepts are non-condition governed in any sense, they lack the “governing conditions” that many other concepts possess.

Summing up I interpret Sibley’s picture in regard to the descriptions we make about artworks and the properties they denote as shown in the following table I.

PROPERTIES OF ARTWORKS	CHARACTERISTICS	TYPES AND USES		EXAMPLES
Non-aesthetic properties	No exercise of taste involved Accessible to anyone with normal capacity Condition-governed	Descriptive use	Features that can be pointed out	<i>Great number of characters, pale colors, kneeling figures in the foreground, the theme of the fugue inverted, the stretto at the close, ...</i>
Aesthetic properties	Judgments of taste involved Require special sensitivity and perceptiveness Non-condition governed Supported by other aesthetic or non-aesthetic properties	Ambiguous use	Critical-context use	<i>Unified, balanced, integrated, dynamic, ...</i>
			Ordinary-context use	
		Typically-aesthetic use		<i>Handsome, elegant, comely, garish, graceful, delicate, dainty. Lovely, beautiful, ...</i>
		Not-primary aesthetic use	Metaphorical transference	<i>Melancholic, sentimental, tragic, lifeless, tightly-knit, ...</i>
Quasi-metaphorical transference	<i>Dynamic, balanced, ...</i>			

Table I. Aesthetic and non-aesthetic properties of artworks according to Sibley

3.6. A classification of aesthetic properties

In this section, I propose an alternative to Sibley's classification.⁷¹ We have to keep in mind that aesthetic properties belong to what I called the "analysis" of the artwork.

I construe the group of aesthetic properties of artworks broader than Sibley does, and include some of Sibley's "non-aesthetic" properties among them too. I will define them first (according to my proposal) and then make a few distinctions.

I use the term "first-level aesthetic properties" to refer to the first set of Sibley's classification, properties that, as I construe them, require the use of taste and some aesthetic discernment.⁷² They can be located and pointed to more or less directly: "Look at those pale colors *here*," "pay attention to the reconciliation scene that comes *now*," and so on. In a word, what qualifies them is that they are structural-formal features of the work.

The remarks about those properties function fundamentally as descriptive, and convey formal-technical information about what is perceived in the object: in painting, properties related to colors, figures, shapes, drawings, lines, designs, and so on. For those reasons, properties of this sort have been qualified by different authors as "physical," "perceptual," "objective," and the remarks we make about them as "neutral" or "descriptive". It makes some sense, but I think it fails,⁷³ given that the second group of properties, as I will argue, may also have such qualities.

⁷¹ This classification is not complete and exhaustive. I present it, tough, as a first step in the right direction.

⁷² I adopt here Korta's (forthcoming) terminology, but not exactly his views about the underlying concepts.

⁷³ Sibley himself avoids such qualifications as I explained in footnote 11.

At first sight, we may think that pointing to the reconciliation scene of a film, at the pale colors of a canvas, or at the inverted theme in a fugue, doesn't require any special ability, and that anyone with "normal eyes or ears" can do it. But this is only partly true. I contend that what makes them "aesthetic," is *their use* as aesthetic remarks about features of the work. Perceiving the properties of an artwork, *qua artwork*, requires a different attitude to that adopted with ordinary objects. The same feature in different contexts has a different value. That seems obvious. However, to keep it in mind has some importance for my argument. The pale colors of a candy, or the pale colors of an impressionist painting have obviously very different functions, and our attitude towards them, the kind of perception we have of them differs. But these same pale colors in Monet's paintings, where the interplay of light and shadows is so important, compared to some other painting in which those colors have no particular significance, also change the aesthetic relevance of the property.

Remarks of the sort "those pale colors on the canvas," "this stretto at the close of the fugue" or "that reconciliation scene in the movie" point to features with some relevance for the aesthetic value of the work. I conclude then that these "first-level properties" of artworks constitute the base of what I call "second-level properties". If following Sibley, everyone accepts the latter as aesthetic properties, I see no reason to exclude the former as being also aesthetic.

Second-level aesthetic properties are the wide range of phenomenological properties that terms like "unified," "balanced," "integrated," "lifeless," "serene," "somber," "dynamic," "powerful," "vivid," "delicate," "moving," "trite," or "sentimental" denote. I draw here on Sibley's examples to propose another characterization of those features of artworks. First of all, I regard second-level aesthetic properties as complex properties, in the sense that their perception is the result of several components being combined in a particular way. They are not reducible to a closed set of structural features, but can be justified by appealing to them.

We see that the painting is *vivid*, that the dance is *delicate*, or that the movie is *sentimental*. It seems that we perceive those features *directly*, without any conscious inference involved. We don't need to reflect (consciously at least) on the qualities that make us perceive a piece of music as, say, gracious or delicate. We just hear them. Whether second-level aesthetic properties are necessarily perceptual properties has been discussed.⁷⁴ In any case, what I mean is that they are *experienced* only by direct acquaintance; that they need to be seen, heard, noticed, in order to be enjoyed and appreciated.

Second-level aesthetic properties require the exercise of taste for their appreciation. Having taste is not just a mere perceptual capacity, neither something extraordinary, but the ability to perceive and appreciate *those second-level* properties of an artwork.⁷⁵ As far as I see it, taste entails perception of those properties.

Unlike Sibley (2004 [1959]), I think second-level aesthetic properties respond to some conditions too. I will avoid in my account the controversial notion of being, or not being, "condition-governed." But the core argument of my work is grounded on the idea that these aesthetic predicates denote real properties of artworks; and that they can be explained by appealing to first-level properties. Once more, I share Kivy's (1973, 1975, 1979, 2015) position in this respect.⁷⁶

My account is grounded on two basic ideas:

- i. That second-level aesthetic properties are phenomenological properties of artworks, that are perceived as simple though they are complex

⁷⁴ Kivy (2011), Carroll (2004), Shelley (2003).

⁷⁵ Kivy, discussing Sibley's "Aesthetic Concepts," defines taste as "an ability over and above the normal perceptual capacities of a person, and the normal mental endowments." (1979: 423) I distance myself from such a definition. Being above normal capacities is not what distinguishes taste from other faculties, but something else.

⁷⁶ Kivy's *Speaking of Art* (1973) is a thorough discussion of Sibley's idea that aesthetic terms are in no possible way condition-governed. The same subject is treated later by Kivy (1975, 1979).

agglomerations of first-level aesthetic properties on which they supervene.

ii. That emotive properties are one among various types of second-level aesthetic properties.

Let's start with the first assumption. One of the things that qualify second-level aesthetic properties like *graceful*, *delicate*, *elegant*, *unified*, *dignified*, *stately*, *garish*, *beautiful* and many others, is that they are "phenomenological" properties of the work. We experience them as simple, even if they are not. We perceive *unity* in the design of a building as a single property, but it is not. The relevant idea here is that second-level aesthetic properties are complex properties that depend on structural ones, and that the former cannot exist without the latter. They might not be reducible to a closed set of structural features (in Sibley's "condition-governed" sense), but can be justified by appealing to some of them.

Recall Sibley's comparisons. I think that the use of terms like "lazy" or "intelligent" to an individual is not less problematic than the use of aesthetic terms like "elegant" or "delicate" to an artwork. The amount of "relevant features" or conditions needed to qualify a subject as intelligent or lazy (with more or less certainty) is as indeterminate as the amount of features required to qualify a painting as elegant. We find the same sort of difficulty in both.

It is not impossible, however, to find a group or set of features sufficient to ensure a justified application of both kind of terms. Being a good chess player, together with being able to understand Gödel's proof, and some other features of this kind, will leave us in little doubt about the subject's intelligence, in the absence of other evidence to the contrary; similarly, wearing beautiful clothes, together with light and efficient movements may justify a person's *elegance*. So I find no "disanalogy" between terms like "elegant" (aesthetic) and "intelligent"

(non-aesthetic).⁷⁷ Aesthetic terms are not so different from other descriptive terms in ordinary (non-aesthetic context) language.

Further, I agree with Kivy and others that first-level aesthetic properties and second-level aesthetic properties are related by supervenience.⁷⁸ Properties like *graceful*, *serene*, *turbulent*, *beautiful* or *unified* depend upon first-level properties, like the pale colors used, or the kneeling figures at the front line. We can say that second-level properties “emerge” as new entities, meaning that their existence depends on the existence of first-order properties.⁷⁹ For instance, the turbulence in Van Gogh’s “Starry Night” would emerge from the fluid dynamics of its lines, and the interplay of movement and light in the canvas: the particular representation of light and its motion in the sky; the intensity of colors; the way in which the star light melts into the sky, and possibly some other first-level properties. That’s what we mean that second-level aesthetic properties supervene on first-level ones, that are determined by them, grounded in them.

In conclusion, the second-level aesthetic properties conform to conditions. It is possible to find criteria under which the presence of a second-order property in an artwork is justified. In this respect, I share Kivy’s view (1979: 431) in that it may be difficult to show conclusively that *all* aesthetic terms are “condition-governed” in Sibley’s sense, but the opposite cannot be shown either.

⁷⁷ Kivy (1979: 423) offers a very interesting argument against the idea that aesthetic terms are non-condition-governed in Sibley’s sense. Kivy points to four different ways to understand the sort of “entailment” Sibley has in mind in his discussion on condition-governed properties. One is by deductive evidence; the second one by inductive evidence; the third one, what I’ll call the “under normal conditions” entailment; the fourth one, what Kivy takes as the “criteriological” sense of entailment, the last one, according to Kivy, picks out the way in which aesthetic terms-properties are governed.

⁷⁸ See Davidson’s (1980 [1970]) definition in Chapter 2.

⁷⁹ This is a recent characterization of emergentism (Barnes 2012: 873):

Emergentism maintains that the parts of a system, through their collective activity, can sometimes give rise to an entity which is quite distinct—in terms of its structure, its causal powers, its ontological makeup, etc—from the parts of the system, or from anything these parts compose.

Kivy (2015) follows Barnes’s characterization.

It is true that what makes an artwork *dainty, graceful, balanced, beautiful* or *turbulent*, depends on how different first-level features are combined in *that* particular work. The set of criteria is difficult to define, but not impossible.

My second assumption is that emotive properties are one type among other second-level aesthetic properties. Recall that by “emotive properties”, I refer to those *in* the work. I do not take them as dispositional properties that elicit emotive reactions in the spectator, or those felt by the author in the creative moment.⁸⁰ I need to show now their place among other second-level properties. I distinguish three types: dynamic properties, relational properties and expressive properties.

I call “dynamic properties” those properties related to physical features like movement, fluidity, weight, intensity, velocity, force and so on. Examples of this category are *vivid, tranquil, heavy, fluid, agitated, spirited, vigorous, powerful, impetuous* and the like.

“Relational properties” are those that are perceived as the relations of different parts of the work, and the relations of those parts with the whole. They require a global perspective. We cannot perceive *balance* in the composition of a painting, if we don’t adopt a global perspective and put our eyes just in the details; we neither can appreciate that the *Goldberg Variations* of Bach are unified, that the main theme presented in the *Aria* appears with different shapes at each of the Variations, if we just listen to some extracts of them. We could say that relational properties require a bird’s eye view. Examples of this type are *balanced, symmetric, harmonious, unified, integrated*, and the like.

Finally, I call “expressive properties” the properties that are closely related to how we experience and express affects. They are the most problematic to define, and many accounts tend to locate them outside the artwork’s aesthetic properties. I have already presented my account of music expressiveness in Chapter 2. Now I contend that expressive features (in any artwork) are also

⁸⁰ For the the distinction between heard properties and dispositional properties in music, see Chapters 1 and 2 above.

aesthetic properties of the work, which are perceived also in virtue of other aesthetic features, in a similar way to how we perceive *balance* in a painting or *unity* in Bach's work.

Among "expressive properties" I think we should make some distinctions. My proposal includes what I call "feeling properties," and "emotive properties." I take as "feeling properties" those like *upbeat, energetic, exciting, relaxing, delicate, serene* and the like, which point at the way we *feel* emotions, and the bodily reactions involved in them. The turbulence of Van Gogh's "Starry Night" would also belong to this category. "Emotive properties" are not felt emotions, nor represented, nor aroused emotions. They are, as with any second-level property, perceptual properties of the work, properties that can be (if we go to the ground) explained in terms of first-level properties. But at the same time, they can be justified appealing to other second-level properties that accompany them. For example, we see anguish in Van Gogh's painting, due not just to "physical" aspects of light, contrast, shapes and so on, but also because we perceive *turbulence* (a feeling property) and *agitation* as "phenomenological" properties too. Examples of emotive properties are *sad, joyful, fearful, angry, hopeful, melancholic, mournful, chilly, anguished* and so on.

Finally, there are some second-level properties that don't necessarily involve description of the work and that behave as purely evaluative, or better said, entail a good or bad-making feature of the work.⁸¹ Examples of this group are *garish, dainty, lovely, beautiful, insipid, gorgeous, pretty, comely, graceful, impressive, handsome, elegant, chilly, majestic, ...and so on*. I regard them as a distinct kind of property, because they often "behave" like that. However, some other features of the second-level, depending on the use or the context they belong to, may carry with them a positive or negative valence too. For example, *tenderness* in a romantic movie will probably entail a positive valence, whereas in a gore film probably would not.

⁸¹ For discussion about "thin" and "thick" aesthetic properties of artworks see Kivy (2015) and Korta (forthcoming).

I summarize these distinctions in the following table.

AESTHETIC PROPERTIES OF ARTWORKS AND ITS TYPES				
PROPERTIES OF ARTWORKS	CHARACTERISTICS	TYPES AND USES		EXAMPLES
First-level aesthetic properties	Structural properties Exercise of taste Perceptual			Great number of characters, pale colors, kneeling figures in the foreground, the theme of the fugue inverted, the stretto at the close, ...
Second-level aesthetic properties	Judgment of taste Phenomenological properties Complex properties Supervene on other features (structural ones or other second level properties) Require special sensitivity and perceptiveness Evaluative and/or descriptive	Dynamic properties ⁸²		Vivid, dynamic, tranquil, heavy, fluid, agitated, sprinted, vigorous, powerful, impetuous, ...
		Relational properties		Unified, balanced, integrated, harmonic, symmetrical. chaos, disorder, ...
		Expressive properties	Feeling properties	Upbeat, tragic, disturbing, dull, calm, tranquil, energetic, exciting, relaxing, unsettled, tender, turbulent, serene, delicate ...
Emotive properties ⁸³	Sad, joyful, fearful, angry, hopeless, hopeful, love, melancholic, tragic, mournful, chilly, anguished, desperate, happy, broody, ...			

Table 2. My picture of aesthetic properties of artworks.

⁸² Some feeling and dynamic properties can be interchanged.

⁸³ Full-blooded emotions and moods.

Chapter 4

4. Expressive and other aesthetic properties of music

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I show the place of expressive properties of music among the other second-level aesthetic properties. Within a realist approach to aesthetic properties, I clarify their nature and show that expressive properties like sadness, joyfulness or anger can be understood by appealing to other aesthetic and non-aesthetic properties in the work. In short, I argue that the expressive features of music depend on other musical features and “emerge” from them. I regard expressive properties as a subset of second-level aesthetic properties.

I want to show that expressive properties like being sad, furious, or joyful, are not so different from other non-expressive but also aesthetic properties like being *elegant*, *delicate* or *graceful*, or others like *tranquil*, *fluid*, *energetic* or *balanced* and *unified*. These are just a few properties that we commonly attribute to music passages. I think that when we talk about music’s expressiveness, we should broaden our perspective and make room not just for the reduced group of full-blooded emotions music can be expressive of, but also for other dynamic and affective aspects that can be heard in music, and might be constituents of ordinary emotions. In this chapter, I make a proposal for a classification of the aesthetic properties of music, and explore their different roles in the work.

4.2. Music alone and its descriptions

I must start by distinguishing between artistic and aesthetic properties in the case of absolute music. Absolute music represents nothing, and all we have to contemplate and appreciate is the music itself. What is artistically relevant *in* music then, cannot be found in any propositional content, and when we evaluate or appreciate a musical piece *as music*, what is apprehended is nothing more than a formal structure of sounds perceived more or less directly by our senses. Any external factor, say the originality of the work, the novelty of the artist, the impact on society, or even its power to arouse emotions in the audience, might add artistic merit to the work, but cannot be regarded as aesthetic properties of it.

There is an apt simile by Peter Kivy which reflects perfectly what I mean and what Walter Pater refers to when he says that “all art constantly aspires towards the condition of music.” (Pater 1980 [1893]: 106). Kivy writes:

Suppose we think of the traditional forms and genres of the fine arts, prior to the twentieth century, as lying along a continuum, with the aesthetic at one extreme and the non-aesthetic at the other. On my view, the extreme aesthetic end of the continuum would be occupied by absolute music, the only “pure” aesthetic art. (Kivy 2011: 74)

This is important because when explaining the expressiveness of music, some accounts appeal to what I took as “external” factors.⁸⁴ Arousalist theories claim that the expressive power of music resides in its power to elicit emotions in the listener; classic expression theories claim that said power resides in those emotions of the composer that are being expressed et cetera. However, as I have argued in Chapter 1, they are wrong. Expressive properties are aesthetic properties of the work, more or less relevant depending on each case. But always have to be understood as properties that we apprehend/recover from

⁸⁴ See Chapter 1 for my criticisms of expression, persona, and arousal theories.

how the music event is composed and organized, in *how it* reaches the listener's ears.

That being the case, if we are to explore the aesthetic properties of music, we will need to focus on what is perceptual (or quasi-perceptual), its formal-structural properties and its outward appearance, a task that belong to analysis (remember the distinction between interpretation, analysis and evaluation made in Chapter 3); that will lead us to break the music work down into smaller parts and see how they interact with each other. However, these are not the sort of aesthetic descriptions we usually read from art critics or make ourselves when we discuss art. An attentive and experienced music listener, even if devoid of musical mastery and the technical terminology required to translate the heard events into words, may detect and appreciate musical features that are relevant in that music piece and see how it works. So, we may describe Schumann's *Des Abends* as "the melody is smoothly syncopated throughout the semiquavers of the right-hand, while the left-hand accompaniment maintains the actual beat" or we may describe it as a "delicate melody," and both descriptions would count as descriptions of its aesthetic properties.

We can describe the same piece of music in several ways. I will pick out four: what I call the "expressive description," the "disciplined performer description," the "cartographic description" and the "attentive aesthetic description."

Let's start with an example. Schumann's *Fantasiestücke*, a collection of eight pieces written for piano in 1837. A work full of expressive features.⁸⁵ Take the first piece, "Des Abends." An ordinary listener⁸⁶ could describe it as a delicate piece of music, where the notes flow softly forming dreamy melodic

⁸⁵ Schumann composed those pieces to represent the duality of his personality, the dreamer and the passionate sides of his mind. They are not prototype pieces of absolute music, I know, but I will allow myself such license. The author gave each of them a title after composing them. However, as an exercise, we will leave out this piece of information and focus on what is heard.

⁸⁶ I don't mean by that someone not acquainted at all with classical music, or someone devoid of interest and musical sensibility; but someone without musical training.

lines that take rest at the end of each section. The listener perceives nostalgic and melancholic traces in it, composed exquisitely. Those expressive qualities give the piece an aesthetic value, we judge them as relevant for the appreciation and evaluation of the piece *qua* artwork. What's more, the listener might be moved by its beauty and it may even evoke in her mind a dreamy or melancholic state. Let's call the description above an "expressive description."

The performer could point to the instruction she finds at the very beginning of the score, "sehr innig zu spielen" (to be played very intimately), and realize that such expressive character needs to be conveyed by playing the piece in that particular manner. She will realize the importance of the length of some of the higher notes, for the phrases to be heard unified and appropriately; of the *crescendo* and *decrescendo* signs that indicate the intensity that the melody should be played at, at different moments. The performer will also respect the *ritardandos* at the end of each section. She will realize how important it is to play the notes that interpose from one hand to the other with the same weight. The performer is aware that the listener should not notice that the fingers of both hands have been crossed and the thumbs interlocked throughout; on the contrary, they should hear it as a continuous and fluid melodic line. Let's call this the "disciplined performer description."

A formal analysis of the piece would point to its overall structure, at the length and of each of the sections, and at its slow tempo. Something like that could be "coldly" added: most of the bars are composed of groups of six semiquavers on the right hand and four on the left hand. The first section has sixteen bars that should be repeated once. Following that there is a short bridge passage of the same tonality, that brings us to a new passage with a changing tonality. The melody is stressed by the longer duration (quavers) of the notes that constitute the melody. This is the "cartographic description."

The analyst could also realize that syncopation is a crucial feature of this music piece and in fact something aesthetically important. The smooth melody interspersed throughout the semiquavers of the right hand, while the left hand

accompaniment maintains the actual beat gives the piece a very particular expressive character. The short bridge phrase presents us with an unexpected rhythmic change and the syncopation that will be essential until the end. She could also appreciate that the tonal change after this short passage, combines the rhythmic structure of the initial part and the recently introduced syncopation; that it is like an answer to the initial motive. This helps the delicacy of the piece acquire another direction, adding complexity, suspense and tension. But that after such a “dialogic” structure of upward and downward melodic lines, in which the musical plot seems not to find an end, the piece resolves softly, again with a *piano* in the opening chords and short motives that direct the piece to a beautiful cadential closure. This is what I call the “attentive aesthetic description.”

I think I won't invite too much controversy if I qualify the “expressive description” and the “attentive aesthetic description” as descriptions that focus on what counts as Schumann's first *Fantasiestück's* beauty. The former lacks technical descriptions about music, the listener might be not familiarized with them, or simply avoids using them. Until the last few words all predicates refer to the music piece and the expressive features heard *in* it. The listener appeals at the end to her response to the beauty of the piece and the melancholic state that elicits in her.⁸⁷ The “attentive aesthetic description,” however, understands the role that different musical features, combined in a particular manner, play in the composition, appreciates the expressive features that result from them, and the contribution of all of that to the aesthetic value of the work.

The “disciplined performer” description focuses on what is found written in the score, the technical aspects of the composition, and the written dynamic and expressive instructions noted by the author for a correct performance.⁸⁸ However it is difficult for the composer's interpretative intentions to be wholly registered on the music sheet. Finally, what I labelled as the “cartographic

⁸⁷ Whether all those qualities count as aesthetically relevant or not I will discuss later.

⁸⁸ Conventional aspects linked to particular styles or times should also be taken into account by a competent performer.

description” gives us a hint of what a cold technical analysis of the piece might be, something that anyone with minimum musical knowledge sitting in front of a score could do; something similar to when a draftsman holds a protractor, a triangle and a ruler, and measures the geometrical shapes and distances of a line drawing.

Some of the qualities that the previous descriptions point to seem to correspond with what we regard as “aesthetic,” while others may not. “A group of semiquavers alone,” “a melody syncopated throughout the semiquavers of the right hand while the left hand accompaniment maintains the beat,” “a smoothly syncopated melody,” “a delicious melody,” “a beautiful melody,” “a good melody,” “a moving melody,” “an exciting melody”... these phrases do not seem to have the same aesthetic relevance.

4.3. Classification of the aesthetic properties of music

The ground of any music event is sound, the stuff that *music* is made of. Sounds, however, the bearers of auditory properties like pitch or timbre,⁸⁹ are heard like

⁸⁹ Tone, pitch and timbre are often confused, and more if they are translated into other languages like Spanish or Basque.

In English, pitch is the key auditory attribute of the sound, that allows us to classify a sound as high or low, and it is determined by sound wave vibrations. Whereas frequency is a scientific unit of measurement, pitch has also a subjective component, that takes into account the relative placement of the frequency within a established tuning system and its relations to other frequencies.

Tone is what distinguishes a sound and makes it recognizable for its constant or definite pitch, and is constituted by partial tones, the fundamental tone and other ones called “harmonics.” The tone of an instrument generally refers to the overall frequency balance of tones and overtones, bass-treble or low-high balance.

Timbre is, its tone-color, the characteristic sound of a particular instrument. In a sense, timbre is everything that lets you distinguish one instrument from another, which results in combinations of different factors: the material of the instrument, the tone, the strength and number of harmonics and so on.

However in Spanish “pitch” is translated as “tono” and defined as “cualidad de los sonidos, dependiente de su frecuencia, que permite ordenarlos de graves a agudos.” In contrast, “tone”

tones when we hear them as music. Obviously not just any sound is music, even if it is produced at a particular pitch and with a particular timbre, or seems to have some kind of organization.⁹⁰

Let me give an example before going further. In the Middle Ages bells had a prominent role for people, and especially for monks and nuns living in cloistered monasteries and convents. The everyday practices of Benedictine monasteries since the eleventh century, for example, have been guided by bells in a very precise way. Their sets of bells were (and still are) extensive and explicit: the call for *prime* was made by a bell called the *parvulum signum*. Other bells such as the *skilla*, the *signum minimum* or the *minus signum* were rung out in the corridors and cloisters, each one with a slightly different tone, indicating different devotional moments of the day. The *tintinabulum*, a light-tone bell, was heard when monks needed to hurry along; bells in deeper tones called monks to assembly, and so on (Hendy 2013: 108).

I don't think the Benedictine monks listened to those bells as music, but as acoustic signals with different conventional meanings for their everyday life. They were distinguished by the monks by their different pitches and other particularities, such as conformity to specific patterns and so on. However, I wouldn't say they count as music. What I mean with that is that not any sound event can be heard as music; there must be a previous purpose in mind for that to happen, i.e. the intention of the author when composing her work and a particular kind of listening involved. When we listen to music, we don't merely listen to acoustic sounds but experience them as musical tones.

In the following section, I will keep in mind the classification proposed in Chapter 3. I aim to show that aesthetic properties of music fit perfectly into that picture.

is mostly translated as "timbre" and defined as "Cualidad de los sonidos determinada por el efecto perceptivo que produce en los oyentes. El timbre del violín. Su timbre de voz". (Those definitions taken from the REAL ACADEMIA ESPAÑOLA)

⁹⁰ On ontological issues, see Chapter 1.

4.3.1. Primary musical components and first-level aesthetic properties of music

Now back to our account of aesthetic properties, let me recall first something very basic: that the sounds that constitute music are organized according to different musical aspects or categories, of which the most fundamental are rhythm, harmony and melody, and other aspects like timbre, texture, dynamics (volume, intensity...) or tempo also play an important role.⁹¹ I don't regard those musical elements as aesthetic properties *per se*, but they are the basic dimensions in which the music's first-level properties can be grouped.

Recall the previous example. Describing Schumman's *Des Abends*'s passage as *two groups of six semiquavers in each bar of the right hand and four in the left hand* does not imply pointing to anything aesthetically significant. It's a bare formal description that any computer program could accomplish, a clear example of what I took before as a "cartographic description." It could be compared with describing how the chemical components of the scarlet red of a painting have been mixed to get the color. The elements mentioned above are a little sample of the raw material of music, notes, duration, rhythmic figures, bars, a few basic components that give music its power.

However, if we observe that *the melody is syncopated throughout the semiquavers of the right hand while the left hand accompaniment maintains the actual beat*, something new is entering into the description. These are examples of *first-level aesthetic properties* of music, features that are directly heard in a music-work, perceptual properties that correspond to the technical-formal features of a composition, which at least require some training and education in order to be heard.

⁹¹ See Table 3.

I take them as aesthetic because they show *how* music elements are combined in that particular piece and *how* they become a relevant part of *that* music-work.⁹² They are features that obey some rules of music theory and fulfill specific conditions, clearly condition-governed in Sibley's sense. The notion of entailment operative here is based on inductive evidence. If we want to justify why we have ascribed a particular property of this sort to the work, we need to point at some heard evidence. "There is a *stretto* in the final part of the fugue". Something like that could be argued in order to prove our assertion: "Listen to the figure presented at the beginning of the piece, notice how the same subject appears at different voices once and again in different sections of the composition; and now pay attention at the final sequence and listen to how it reappears in one voice, but is interrupted by the sudden presence of the same motive in some other voice." There is sufficient inductive evidence to justify our judgment.

Describing musical passages like "there is a *stretto* at such and such bars," or like "there is an inversion at this point of the Fugue" requires the deployment of taste, which Sibley defined as "an ability to *notice* or *see* or *tell* that things have certain qualities". (2004 [1959]: 128) For instance, to perceive the *stretto* at the end of a fugue, we need to realize that while the *subject* in one voice is interrupted, another takes up the chance to imitate the previous figure. We might not know the technical name of the property, but that is not a problem; first and foremost, we need to realize that there are different voices entangled. But to recognize the feature and to be aware of its aesthetic value in that particular piece of music, something more than normal ears and intelligence is required.

⁹² As Sibley (2004 [1959]: 133) points out, when we describe artworks, we involve and concern ourselves with particular works. We talk about "*its* pale colors," "the way *the* lines converge," or how *the* melody is syncopated.

Musical dimensions	Examples of perceptual features (first-level properties)
Melody	Clear melody, downward melody, upward melody, linear melody, arpeggios, ornaments, syncopation, stretto, ...
Harmony	Dissonance, minor mode, major mode, diatonic scale, chromatic scale, active chords, ...
Rhythm	Halting rhythm, light rhythm, irregular pauses, regular rhythm, rubato, ritardando, halting, smorzando, ...
Dynamic	decrescendo, Crescendo, pianissimo, forte, restrained dynamics, smorzando, ⁹³ staccato, loudness, conflict and resolution, intensity, climax points, ...
Timbre (tone) ⁹⁴	Strident, dark, grave, ...
Texture	Thick texture, thin texture, orchestral, instrumental, vocal, counterpoint,
Tempo	Allegro , Andante, Largo, Fast or slow tempo, Presto, smorzando, ...

Table 3. Examples of musical first-level properties

Noticing an inversion or a counterpoint in a fugue, implies being able to identify the main motive in voices that are “hidden”, below the top line where the untrained ears expect it to be. An accent on that note, the *crescendo before that climax point, this unexpected modal change, the rubato ...* Just a few examples to show that those properties are not of the kind that anyone with normal intelligence and ears can notice. You need to perceive not just a sequence of notes, but *how* those notes are combined and interact with each other to create a specific musical effect. We may discuss the relevance of some first-level aesthetic property in particular, but when someone attentively listens to Schumman’s *Des Abends*, as (beautiful) music, she stops perceiving just

⁹³ Smorzando is a combination of ritardando and decrescendo.

⁹⁴ See Chapter 4.

semiquavers and notes, and the cartographic mind changes her view and attitude towards the music piece. It is a matter of taste, of being aware of how, for instance, the shape of the melody is drawn throughout alternated semiquavers, and significance of this feature to the aesthetic value of the work.

What I take from it is that the perceived sounds of music stand in *significant* relation to one another. Noticing how they are entangled and grouped together in that particular piece of music, in that specific instant of the music event, makes first-level aesthetic features artistically (and in particular aesthetically) relevant. This “disinterested” exercise, requires a higher faculty than simply hearing notes. It requires taste. Noticing properties like a *stretto*, a counterpoint or a rubato, is the first step to the aesthetic appreciation of a work.

Summing up, first-level aesthetic properties of music are those technical features perceived in the work whose recognition doesn't depend on other aesthetic features, but does require the listener to be aware and to appreciate how several musical components (rhythmic, harmonic, melodic, dynamic and so on) are structured. They are “non-dependent” on “organic” properties of the work for which recognition, appreciation, and aesthetic sensitivity is required. Moreover, I think that those are the basis on which higher-level aesthetic properties, such as being elegant, balanced or melancholic, are grounded. This leads us to analyze the nature of those other sort of aesthetic properties next.

4.3.2. Second-level aesthetic properties of music

We said that it is natural to apply predicates to artworks without appealing to the specific vocabulary of the artistic genre, but by using terms that are also used in non-artistic contexts.⁹⁵ Let's bring here what we analyzed in Chapter 3 and focus on the second-level aesthetic properties of music. To say that a passage shows *tension*, that the theme is *pompous*, to describe the melody as *smooth*, as *turbulent*, that the strings sound *garish* or the sonic atmosphere is

⁹⁵ See Chapter 2.

dreamy or *melancholic*, sounds perfectly natural to our ears and these are often the type of descriptions that we make of musical pieces.

Someone could be tempted to say that what they denote is not a property *in* the object, but mental constructions of the listener; and that hearing music as (and describing it as) *smooth*, *turbulent*, *garish*, *dreamy* or *melancholic* is subjective or relative to the subject. What I want to argue now is that this view is not correct, and that properties like *melancholic*, *turbulent*, *garish* or *dreamy* are *in* music.

I recall that second-level aesthetic properties of music works are complex properties heard in the musical event, properties that emerge out of it as something new, but supervene upon first-level structural features, and are justified by appealing to some of those first-level structural features. And that's the reason why hearing them requires something more than merely detecting technical features. A listener trained in musical theory is able to describe Bach's *Sarabande* as a piece that resolves with a harmonic change or the predominant D minor to F major, and so on, and make use of knowledge of music theory and technical vocabulary. But this is no more than "cartographic" description of what is heard in music. The same listener however might well not be able to hear the piece as a *sad* or *delicate* musical passage. In contrast, some other listener, devoid of technical words but having other perceptual abilities, might well be able to do it.

We experience the *gracefulness*, *elegance*, or *garishness* of the music-work as simple qualities, in the same way as colors, tastes or smells are presented to our senses. However, they are not simple at all. If we want to analyze what is meant when we predicate gracefulness of a music-work, for example, we should break the work down into several pieces, point to certain other heard musical properties related to the perceived attribute, pick out many other underlying features that make the musical piece appear elegant, graceful and so on. But this is not a simple task, and that's why two persons may disagree concerning what they hear. Should we want to convince the other that my appreciation is

correct, and the work is *unified*, I should point to the formal features that cause it to be so. The structure behind the properties of *elegance*, *balance* or *melancholy* is complex. The classification I propose distinguishes different types of second-level properties in regard to the type of relation they involve: “dynamic properties,” “relational properties” and “expressive properties,” and among the latter “feeling properties,” and “emotional properties.”

Second-level aesthetic properties		Combination of first-level aesthetic properties (examples)
Types	Examples	Music properties
Dynamic properties	<i>Vivid</i>	Fast tempos (allegro, presto), high rhythmic activity, sharp and strident timbres, brilliant high notes, <i>con fuoco</i> dynamics, colorful orchestral effects, high rate of events, ...
Relational properties	<i>Unified</i>	Theme present at different parts, clear tonal center, alternation of tension and release, repetition of motives, maintenance of dynamic identity, consonant tonality, continuity, structural coherence, ...
Feeling properties	<i>Turbulent</i>	Unstable chords and harmonic progressions, dissonances, minor tonalities, dark instrumental color, unresolved cadences, wide dynamic range, high level rhythmic activity, dramatic dialog of difference voices, staccato, increasing speed, ...
Emotive properties	<i>Sad or melancholic</i>	Downward melodies, slow tempo, restrained dynamics, soft dynamics (<i>pianos</i>), minor tonalities, legatos and continuous flow in phrases, <i>smorzandos</i> , ...

If I describe Liszt Transcendental Etude No 3 as an example of a *unified* and *integrated* musical work, we need a broader perspective of it; e.g. hearing a short section may not allow us to perceive such a property; or one may need to listen to the work several times to notice that it is unified and its elements integrated at several levels over a conventional harmonic schema. The property of being *graceful* or *melancholic* for example, cannot be reduced to a closed set of musical features that unequivocally determines that feature. We cannot say that Chopin's Prelude Op.28, No.4 is *necessarily* desperate due to its slow tempo, its minor tonality, the way the melody drags on, its dynamic marks, the final *smorzando* and so on.⁹⁶ Logical reduction is not possible, such a list of features doesn't make a music piece necessarily desperate. Moreover, just a single musical feature added to the set, can vary the aesthetic character of the work in question. Take a musical passage with specific elements, whichever, and change its mode while the rest of the elements remain identical. Most probably the expressive character of the work will change with just that single variation.

Table 4. Possible combinations of musical features (first-level aesthetic properties) and their relation to different types of second-level aesthetic properties. Four examples.

Second-level aesthetic properties involve two aspects. One is that they *may* carry some kind of implicit description, and give us a clue to what is "happening" in the musical work. Such properties are the result of a complex combination of many other musical features, upon which they are "ontologically dependent." Rhythmic patterns, harmonic structure, melodic lines, dynamics, texture ... are structured according to musical rules to shape sound into formal structures. When we hear those complex structures, when we

⁹⁶ Two anecdotes connected with this beautiful piece of music: This composition, together with Mozart's Requiem, was played at his request at Chopin's funeral. George Sand is said to have given titles to each of Chopin's Preludes at their estate in Majorca, where the Preludes were composed. However, that title score is lost.

detect serenity, delicacy, anger, or beauty in the music event, what we hear are also many other formal features.

The second aspect is that many of them ascribe value.⁹⁷ I admit that many of the terms we apply to aesthetic properties of artworks, carry with them a valence, and a value, positive or negative. Saying Stravinsky's symphonies are *unified*, *balanced*, or *impressive*, for example, connotes the ascription of positive value to the work. Similarly, being *garish* entails a negative one. But whereas *unified* or *balanced* give us also some information about the composition, I cannot see what we learn from "impressive." Having the general picture in mind we need to focus now on what "expressive properties" of music actually are.

⁹⁷ Kivy defends the idea that ascribing a second-level aesthetic property "to an artwork is, *ipso facto*, to pass a negative or positive judgment." (Kivy 2015: 122)

Chapter 5

5. Emotions in music

5.1. Introduction

Matravers (2010) says that there are two main questions concerning art and expression. One about the properties that cause us to experience a work of art as expressive, a task related in part to empirical psychology. The other about the nature of expression, such that it illuminates our understanding of art, a philosophical matter. In Chapter 2 I argued for the view that the nature of “expression” in music, is that music exhibits emotional properties by means of its musical formal features. In Chapter 3 I dealt with the issue of aesthetic properties and the place that expressive properties occupy among them. Chapter 4 brought us back to music, the main subject of this work, to analyze how the classification of aesthetic properties of artworks in general could fit with music. Now it is time take a step further and see *how* it is that music is able to include those expressive properties in it, particularly emotive properties. With this aim in mind, the core issue of this chapter is to explain how do emotions “get into the music”, particularly into absolute music.

The account I present ties together the two questions mentioned above. I argued that the nature of expression in music is located in its musical properties, that it derives from properly musical features, and that it is precisely the detection of such properties which will illuminate its nature. Now it is time to explain in virtue of which properties a musical work is expressive of specific emotive properties and how listeners experience it as such.

In Chapter 2 I used as paradigmatic of “X-expression” the air of sadness exhibited by the face of the Saint Bernard dog, which could be explained by

appealing to the physical features we observe in the face, its glance and gesture. They are detectable, observable, and identifiable. We could argue that we identify those features as expressive of sadness because they resemble or look like human sad faces.

But in the case of music, there is no obvious gesture, gait, or feature to be identified as expressive of any particular emotion, no evident parallelism between those features and the ones exhibited in full-blooded emotional responses. However, the answer, the explanation, should be about what is properly musical and its “appearance.”

Having argued that music is not representational and that music’s expressive properties are to be found *in* music, it is time now to explain *how* it is that we hear emotions in music. What I intend to show now, is that music *does* have the necessary properties to explain its expressiveness, and that those properties are to be found *in* music. So, the challenge is to identify which sort of properties they are, and see *how* expressiveness, particularly of emotions, could be explained by appealing to them.

Recall that we rejected a strong formalist account of music (Hanslick 1986 [1891]) and argued for a place for emotive properties in the formalist picture. I take from formalism the primary role of form and structure. At the same time I contend that we can accommodate emotional properties in music. Assuming that emotive properties are heard properties derived from its sonic structure, i.e. from its first-level aesthetic properties, we can explain how they “emerge” to the surface. The account I present is inspired in Kivy’s “enhanced formalism”, but with a few revisions.

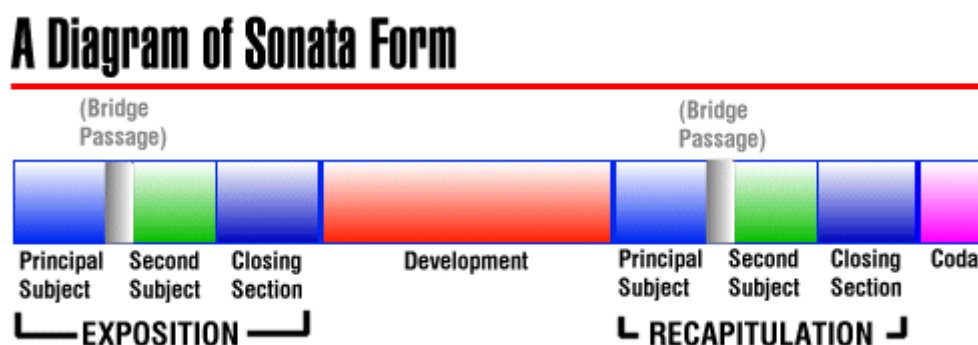
At this point, I think that we should explain what “form” is and see if there is any possibility to explain how expressive properties are heard within it. If this objective is achieved, it will still make sense to describe music in expressive terms like “melancholic,” “anguish,” or “joyful”. It is time to show *how* it is that we “hear emotions” *in* music.

5.2. Music and its emotional machinery

5.2.1. The concept of “form” in music theory

In music theory, “form” is a temporal pattern of sounds, the architecture or overall structure of a music work. *The Oxford Companion to Music* (1977) defines musical form as “a series of strategies designed to find a successful mean between the opposite extremes of unrelieved repetition and unrelieved alteration”. Examples of musical forms, which vary in time and style, are the Sonata, Symphony, Partita, Rondo, Fugue, Scherzo, Nocturne, Waltz and many others. In general terms, they differ in structure, but also in length, in the number or type of movements, in the lineal-temporal combination of parts, in their role within more complex structures, or in the pattern of formal sections within a single piece. For example, a Rondo, follows a pattern of this sort: A-B-A-C-A-D-A, where each of the letters represents a thematic section.

In the following diagram, I show, just as an example the overall structure of the Sonata Form:



Sonata Form or also called Sonata-Allegro Form, in www.stewartsvillelutheran.org

This example is a diagram of a single movement based on conflict and resolution, a dialectic debate among two opposing key centers and associated themes, that evolves in three main parts: the exposition (or tonal opposition), the development (or escalation of tension), and the recapitulation (the tonal

resolution). It is often used in classical music as the first movement of works (not just in Sonatas). In a more thorough analysis, we could describe and dissect the form for more details, including; detecting climax, modulation, coda etc., but I think this the above diagram is enough to get an idea of what form means in music theory and its role in music expressiveness.

5.2.2. Form and music expressiveness

Let us see what formal elements of the sort we just described have to do with music expressiveness. As I said, musical form offers a view of the overall structure of a work. It could somehow be compared to a house plan or a city map. But there is a fundamental difference with these cases: house plans and city maps are spatial representations, whereas musical forms are *structures in time*. The place of its units in the formal-temporal structure, and the relation between them, brings to the listening experience particular sensations like contrast, opposition, development, tension, repetition, release or recapitulation. That being the case, the role of a musical form is to guide the listener through the work, and make her perceive its general structure. The musical events that constitute a particular musical form create expectation in the listener (Meyer 1956), and in part the understanding of them depends the degree to which they are more or less expected. Moreover, the listener may hear emotional properties throughout the work due to the characteristics of that particular musical form. An example will be helpful.

Consider Beethoven's Sonata no. 8 in C minor, Op. 13.⁹⁸ The work is composed of three movements, like many of the classical sonatas. I will describe the first one in some detail, and briefly summarise the other two.

The first movement is a sonata form (like the one I describe above), composed in turn by three main sections. The movement starts with a slow and intense Grave introduction in C minor. It is basically a series of symmetric bars

⁹⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cg9KQ61obiU>. Beethoven' Sonata no. 8 in C minor, Op. 13.

in ascension towards a short climax, which dissolves in a chromatic descent of thirty-second-notes. The introduction makes way for the *Allegro con Brio* exposition, with a quick theme also in C minor. The following two themes in E flat minor and E flat major successively contrast both in their rhythmical patterns and the roles both hands play in them. The development begins by returning briefly to the Grave section (First Tempo), this time in G minor, which opens up to a very quick first theme, now in E minor, that evolves into contrasting sections, turbulent sections, and ends up with a single descent of half-notes in a major chord towards the recapitulation. In the recapitulation, the first, second and third themes are recovered this time all in C minor. The closing resembles the first theme but played forte and fortissimo. Finally, the Grave returns partially with piano and ends with the first theme in C minor.

The second movement is much shorter, the famous *Adagio Cantabile* in A flat major adagio movement, of rondo form (A-B-A-C-A). It interchanges the piano melodic part (A) with sections in different keys and rhythmical patterns, a melody that becomes more complex with time, fuller with notes, and develops into a climax with the crescendo. The third movement is in *Allegro Rondo* form, quicker and more linear, with five sections in contrasting keys and changing dynamics. The closure is a fast and powerful descent that ends in C minor.

Notice that I have used no expressive terms in the formal description of this Sonata, and limited myself to purely musical, first-level property, vocabulary. I mention this, because it shows how the heard expressive properties are the result of formal-structural properties and their arrangement. They simply “emerge” from this structure full of sonic plays, in the sense that the “formal” descriptions of the latter can be translated into descriptions belonging to the former.

Let us proceed with such a translation. The introduction is heard as dramatic, grave, with suspense; the first theme as energetic and agitated, dialogic but serious, and with force. The second movement, *Adagio Cantabile*, is led by the delicacy of the melody, exquisite, clear, drawing the listener into a

calm and warm musical experience, while passion and force comes with the crescendo in the climax of the movement. The third movement, in contrast, sounds lively, light, jolly, but forceful and with a decision at the end.

Themes transported from minor to major keys, active chords (unstable ones) that resolve into stable major chords, sudden chromatic descents, constant changes in dynamic levels, the contrast in tempo of the three movements, ... all these musical elements and their specific combination play a role in the composition, and emotional properties are heard thereof. Explaining the role of emotive properties within a work, is nothing more than explaining the role of structural and sonic elements of music within that work. Likewise the resolution from a minor and dissonant chord into a C major chord can be explained as a change from turbulence to calmness or stability.

5.2.3. Syntactical-structural events and their sensuous properties

There is more than the overall structure in music, more to understand and to appreciate in form. In fact, all formal structures are composed of sensuous properties, the “raw material” of music: notes, chords, accidentals, rhythmical figures, keys, dynamic features and many others. What I want to show in the following lines is that expressive, and among them emotional, properties are nothing more than perceptual qualities emergent from particular combinations of formal and sensuous elements.⁹⁹

We should give now a second step and identify those smaller musical events that are not part of the form. A leaping melody, a chromatic descent, a diatonic sequence of chords, a diminuendo, a coda, a counterpoint ... are all examples of small structural events in a composition, with particular properties doing their part (first-level properties). Adopting Kivy’s idea of “syntactical

⁹⁹ For the distinction between first- and second-level aesthetic properties, see Chapter 3 for art in general, and Chapter 4 for music in particular.

event,” they are defined as “those small events that take place within the musical structure” (Kivy 2002: 72), or anything that “happens” within a musical structure. In fact when I described Beethoven’s Sonata, I could not avoid referring to a few of them.

We call them syntactical because there are rules and principles that govern their sound structure, rules acknowledged by the composer and followed or violated at her pleasure (or by mistake, in involuntary cases). Notice that the more familiarized the listener is with those rules, the better her understanding of the work. We should also keep in mind that rules change depending on the context, period and genre. But let us leave this issue for the moment and pick up the previous thread.

In order to answer the question of where the expressiveness of music resides, we must specify what syntactical or structured sound events are covered by their rules. Melody, harmony, dynamics, timbre/tone, rhythm, texture and tempo are the elements we look for. The specific shape they take will contribute in defining the properties of a music event. We can easily imagine a solo of the rhythmic section in an orchestra, where there is no melody. But we could hardly think about music without any rhythmical pattern or harmonic structure at all. What I claim is that any heard property in music could be described by appealing to the combination of some of those elements. In other words, any proper description could be reduced to the combination of properties of those sound elements, independently of the technical knowledge of the listener.

I might describe Chopin’s Nocturne Op. 72, No.1,¹⁰⁰ by pointing to its slow tempo, minor tonality, downward melody, restrained dynamics and halting rhythm in a more or less technical vocabulary. Similarly, when I hear sadness or melancholy in the work, I may justify my perception appealing to a more detailed description of the features perceived in it, a description of the sort I just made above. I hear sadness, because I perceive its slow tempo and minor

¹⁰⁰ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h5_V-d8HjhU . Chopin’s Nocturne Op. 72, No.1

tonality, and hear the melody unfolding downwards in pianissimo. The example illustrates what I said in my hypothesis, i.e., that the complex emotional properties heard in music supervene on the combination of those perceptual properties, or as I argued before, on the formal structure of the work.

Composers avail themselves of their expertise and knowledge about how different musical elements should be combined and structured in order to be expressive of some emotional property or other. It is generally agreed that minor keys are associated for example with melancholic qualities, and that unresolved diminished chords are associated with turbulence. It is also likely that composers encounter expressive properties in their work unintentionally, emerging “casually” from the elements of their composition. In any case, none of those possibilities contradicts the thesis I just defended.

So far I have explained that music “possesses” emotions as perceptual properties and that those complex properties emerge from the structure and combination of pure musical elements and form. However, I have not clarified yet how or why some musical properties are heard as some emotional properties and not others, why minor chords and slow tempos are associated with sadness, or major keys and fast tempos with cheerfulness, and not the other way around, for example. Why don’t we just perceive the formal/structural properties of music, without hearing emotions in it, or as Kivy (2002) asks “how do emotions get into the music?”

5.3. How do we hear the emotive properties of music?

5.3.1. A resemblance account of music expressiveness

I have already argued that neither expression theories, nor arousalists, nor persona theories offer a convincing account of music expressiveness. I have also

argued that emotions are not literally possessed by music, but that they are exhibited as emergent properties of the pure sound structure. But the question is, how? Why emotional properties usually attributed to humans are heard in music? Why and how do we perceive and recognize them?

Having rejected other theories of music expressiveness as problematic and unsatisfactory, the correct explanation in my view should follow the path initiated by Peter Kivy (1980, 1989) and developed by Stephen Davies (1994). Kivy argues in *The Corded Shell* (1980), later reprinted as *Sound Sentiment* (1989), that “music is expressive in virtue of its resemblance to expressive human utterance and behavior” (1980: 56). The idea of “contour” of music refers to its “sonic shape, which bears a structural analogy to the heard and seen manifestations of human emotive expression” (Kivy 2002: 40). He argues that because we are evolutionarily predisposed to see things as animate, like “the seeing-faces-in-clouds phenomenon”, we tend to hear music as animate too.

I claim that when we attribute emotional properties to music it is because we recognize in it properties that resemble in one way or another how emotions are expressed or felt by humans. In other words, we perceive some similarities in the outer “appearance” (Davies 1994) or “contour” of a central case emotional experience (genuine human emotions), and the appearance of music, the way musical properties are shaped before our eyes, or better, ears.

The idea of resemblance is that music presents features of emotions. The account is based on the analogy of human expression and music expressiveness. This can be explained appealing mainly to similarities in the dynamic structure of music and some behavior, movement and physical reaction observed in people when they experience emotions.

Following a similar line, the account defended by Malcolm Budd is interesting, especially the resources he identifies in virtue of which music is able to resemble some aspects of feeling: tension-relaxation, upwards-downwards direction, magnitude, speed, rhythm of felt movement. We could say that music sounds the way we feel:

The basic and minimal concept of the musical expression of emotion comes to this: when you hear music as being expressive of emotion E—when you hear E in the music—you hear the music as sounding like the way E feels; the music is expressive of E if it is correct to hear it in this fashion or a full appreciation of the music requires the listener to hear it in this way. So the sense in which you hear the emotion in the music—the sense in which it is an audible property of the music—is that you perceive a likeness between the music and the experience of the emotion. (Budd 1995: 137)

My intention is not to investigate in depth those similarities now, but just to argue that the resemblance account may help to understand the issue of expressivity in music and that it deserves further and deeper exploration. Let us examine it further.

5.3.2. Facial, vocal, body expression and music expressiveness

We can regard music as expressive without entailing that what is perceived is the expression of an emotion. Similarly, we may perceive a face as happy looking, but this appearance may be not the expression of an emotional state but feigned, or perhaps happy-looking by nature, for instance. The example of the Saint Bernard dog's face belongs to the latter. Their sad looking physiognomy has nothing to do with its feeling sad, but with the appearance of sadness. It could even be happy and cheerful but still appear to be sad. It is easy to notice the resemblance of its demeanour or facial expression with that of people expressing (or pretending to express) sadness, as a kind of caricature (Kivy 2001: 37). It can be accounted for by the combination of several facial features, like the downwards looking glance, the form of the wrinkles, the puffy face, the dropping jaw, the wrinkled brow, the drooping mouth and ears... Likewise, when we perceive an expressive property in a musical piece, the description behind it involves complex features, not significant by themselves, but significant in conjunction with other features.

Despite the likeness in both cases, however, it is much more difficult to find a proper account of the perceived emotional properties in music than it is in emotional-looking faces or body posture of non-humans. There are at least two reasons for that. One is that there is no obvious parallelism between human face or body expressive properties and those in music. The other one is the temporal nature of music. We don't call a musical passage melancholic appealing just to an instance or to a particular expressive property, but it is rather the result of musical features unfolding through time and affecting each other. However, those difficulties do not necessarily mean that similarities between human expressions of emotions, and the way music exhibits emotions cannot be found, and therefore, can be perceived by the listener.

5.3.3. Resemblance of expression of emotions and music expressive features

Let us try to sort out some of those similarities. Humans express their emotions, consciously or unconsciously, by facial gestures and bodily movements. Certain behaviors, movements, gaits, facial and body gestures are characteristic of specific emotions. For instance, when someone is joyful or optimistic, her gait appears more secure, precise and energetic. One may look upwards, and hold a "fixed gaze", the mouth will also turn upwards and facial wrinkles may recover their muscular elasticity and tone. Body gestures are also expressive of emotions, dropping shoulders, a downward tilted head, and slow gesturing may exhibit melancholy-like emotions, rather than those related to pleasurable or joyful states. Moreover, the tone of the speaking voice and other voice features may also change depending on the emotional state. For instance, sadness makes us speak in a lower pitch or tone of voice, the timber may also be altered, the rhythm becomes slower and less deliberate.

Turning to music, we should identify the properties that, being part of music and arranged in a particular way, can lead us to hear emotional or affective qualities in music. I have mentioned before, that the musical

machinery is composed of several elements. Let's try to match those elements, with perceptible features of human emotional reactions and examine some examples. I have drawn a table that shows what I take as the basic perceptible musical aspects or elements, key words associated with those aspects, and examples that are useful to compare with cases of genuine descriptions of emotions.

Musical aspects or dimensions	Perceptual properties (Keywords)	Predicates (examples)
Melody	Arrangement of sounds, succession, phrase	arpeggiated, chromatic, descending, leaping, ornamented, ...
Harmony	Verticality, chords, mode, key	colorful, dissonant, diatonic, major mode, minor mode, ...
Dynamics	Intensity, volume	con fuoco, crescendo, diminuendo, forte, piano, unchanging dynamics, ...
Timbre (tone)	Tone color, description of sound, instruments	dark, mellow, sonorous, strident, ...
Rhythm	Pattern, time, duration, metric extraction	cadence, constant, halting, repetitive, rubato,
Texture	Layers, quality, combination, instrumentation	counterpoint, instrumental, orchestral, thick texture, ...
Tempo	Rate, pace, speed	accelerando, allegro, cantabile, largo, ritenuto, walking speed,...

Table 5. Relation between musical aspects or dimensions, perceptible features and some related predicates.

If we have a look at the descriptive keywords associated with those musical elements and their examples, we see that most of them can be associated with a speaking voice and its features, with how people express themselves.

We may describe a cheerful voice pointing to characteristics that could somehow be described as its “timbre,” “rhythm,” “melody,” “tempo” or “dynamics.” It is probably melody the musical aspect that is most commonly associated with the modulations of the speaking voice, and regarded as a primary source of expressiveness. It may sound anguished, crying, harsh, or mellow, melancholic and peaceful depending on how it is arranged. Dissonant passages, sudden melodic changes and leaps, irregular pauses, downward successions or notes et cetera, are more likely to be heard as unpleasant emotions like anguish or torment, just as when someone linguistically expresses her emotion with vocal modulations of this sort. In contrast, music heard as peaceful and calm is more likely to be arranged in a more linear pattern, with softer swings, balanced phrases and medium register.

It is important to note that most musical formal aspects are heard in combination with others. Melodies are drawn into rhythmical patterns, belong to specific time signatures (metric), and are part of a tonal system. The beautiful downward melody of Chopin’s Nocturne Op. 72, No.1 is heard as melancholic at least in part due to the slow-andante tempo, E minor tonality and halting rhythmical pattern. Therefore, determining exactly how different musical aspects affect each other would take us very long, and need much more space and time.

Dynamics, the aspect that plays with intensity, volume and modulation of sounds is taken in music performance as an essential aspect of expressiveness. The same score played without attending to those expression signs, without the crescendos, fortes or pianissimos sounds much colder and mechanical. The rubatos, for instance, are often to be understood without any specific instruction in the score that indicates them. They allow expressive and rhythmic freedom by speeding up or slowing down the tempo of a piece, and

entail a global understanding of the work, of how the structure of sounds needs to be interpreted or played. I would say that similar properties are heard when someone is expressing emotions not only with the speaking voice, but also by means of the strength, decision, vigor or lassitude of body gestures and movements. Listening to the dynamic aspects in a music work helps to engage emotionally with it, and hear affective properties that otherwise could not be extracted.

At first sight, it may seem that there is not a straightforward explanation of why we attribute specific emotions to music, appealing to resemblance with the contour of body movements, gestures or facial expressions in cases of human emotional responses. Musical elements are shaped in sound, whereas human expression is multimodal, a combination of sound (voice) and visual features. There is nothing to be seen in music, unless we are not reading a score or watching a concert. So, in order to find a convincing explanation of music expressiveness, we should face this cross modal problem: we hear sounds, but we do not “see” anything moving or making gestures of one or another sort. It may be objected that movement, motion in music is not literally heard, that it can only be metaphorical to apply visual properties to heard properties.

However, I claim that this does not need to be understood in that way. In fact, I think that there are some properties, particularly those associated with movement, which can be identified with *both sight and sound* (Davies 1994). As I mentioned before, the special expressive power of music, in comparison to other artistic media, is due in large part to its temporal nature. Music is dynamic, and unfolds through time. I suggest that musical elements or aspects (see the table above) are combined in such a way that sound structure acquires several “dimensions.”

1. The harmonic structure and its associated properties (modes, chords, key-signature) provide a “vertical” sense to music.

2. Rhythm, melody and tempo have a linear structure, acquire their significance over time. I label this dimension as “horizontality,” the temporal ground in which the rest of the elements integrate.

3. Finally, dynamics (intensity of sounds), texture (complexity and richness of sounds) and timbre (color of sounds) provide music with a third dimension, what I will call “profundity.”

The structural organization, its temporal nature and combination of all those elements, makes music complex, rich, and special. Here resides, I suspect, the necessary machinery for emotional properties to be heard, perceived or identified by humans when listening to a musical work. Many things advanced here require further research, exploration, and maybe also empirical testing, and I shall identify some challenges for this project.

5.4. Some objections and problems

First, I don’t intend to try to defend the claim that music has the capacity to exhibit just any kind of emotion or mood.¹⁰¹ It is hardly possible for listeners to hear music being expressive of envy, pride, or arrogance for example. At the same time “the garden variety of emotions” (Kivy 1980), that is to say, the ordinary emotions like fear, anger, hope, anguish, sadness and a few others, cannot be heard in *any form*. What I mean by that is that we perceive some basic emotions, and only “in a general form” (Kivy, 1990: 174-175). The resemblance account expounded above suggests a explanation for this difference. Some emotions (fear, anger, sadness...) have identifiable outward characteristics in central case experiences, whereas others have not (envy, pride, jealousy...). Kivy, following Moravcsik, refers to these as “Platonic Attitudes”, emotions “noncontingently attached to their objects” (Kivy 1980, 1990). For the latter ones to be recognized, we need more context, and absolute music cannot provide it in absence of lyrics or program. It could be possible to hear grandeur

¹⁰¹ See Chapter 2.

in a Beethoven's composition, but in order to perceive, say, pride, we need some beliefs and knowledge about the background of the work that music alone doesn't provide.

Second, to my mind, resemblance as an account of music expressiveness fails to explain how properties that belong to aspects of harmony play a role in the perception of emotive properties in music. It is a fact that minor chords and modes contribute to the hearing of sadness, melancholy or gloom, and are associated with pessimistic and negative moods; diminished chords produce a sensation of instability, anguish, incompleteness, turbulence, uneasiness about something that needs to be resolved. Discordant chords produce tension, are disturbing and sound unpleasant. In contrast, major chords and harmonic structures are commonly related to higher spirits, like joy, cheerfulness, excitement, vigor and the like.

However, I don't find a satisfactory explanation of how or why we attribute such qualities to those musical properties, why a minor chord is heard as melancholic, major as cheerful, and not the other way around. Kivy himself acknowledges that "the contour theory cannot be the whole story" (2002: 43). The base of harmony is mathematical, and the principles governing the relation of tones can be explained by numeric functions, by frequency of air waves measured in hertz. Combinations of different tones make us hear them as more consonant or dissonant, and consequently each tone will play a different role in the harmonic structure of a piece of music. Since the ancient Greeks it is thought that musical modes are connected to mood tones, and since then modes have been classified according to the intervals between the notes within a musical scale. Perhaps it is the case that we are somehow hardwired to perceive some pitch relations as more appropriate than others, and that their combination causes in us feelings of the sort I have just described in the previous examples.

Third, it may also be objected that appealing to resemblance does not explain the significance or the importance we attribute to music's expressive

power; that similar emotional resemblances are found in other artifacts or natural elements, for example, and we do not take them as deserving special attention, or call them expressive just because we are aware of some apparent similarities. We could respond to this objection by pointing out that music is ingeniously designed by the composer, and deliberately used as a source of aesthetic pleasure. I think this is sufficient to clarify why the perception of resemblance between music and emotional properties acquires special relevance, and is regarded as musical expressiveness. In fact, part of the amazing power of music resides in its capacity to exhibit emotions.

5.5. Music and conventions

I would like to finish this chapter by clarifying that I am not denying that in music perception and consequent appreciation there is also a contextual, cultural or conventional factor. Conventions related to styles and different periods, cultural context or personal background can affect the appreciation of some musical features rather than others, or to the emotional attributions made to them.

Western music, for example, has developed and established the major-minor tonal system over the course of the last centuries, a system accompanied by “a whole arsenal of musical themes and harmonic techniques, whose emotive character [becomes] instantly recognizable to the competent listener” (Kivy 2004: 163).

The same piece of music may be expressively clear or opaque depending on how familiarized the listener is with it, and, obviously, depending on her particular musical sensibility too. I might not feel anything in particular listening to Eastern traditional music, not appreciate its virtues, and as a result not enjoy the aesthetic experience of listening to it. The same may happen to listeners that are not acquainted with any particular music style. The more we get into it, the more we understand it, and the more we appreciate and enjoy it.

As I said, there might be some element of truth in this idea. But as far as I know, there is little comparative research done in this regard, and it could be also argued that emotions are not equally experienced in all cultures. There is a great deal of learning behind our emotional life, acquired by experience and imitation from our near context. However, there is empirical evidence showing that some basic emotions and the way humans express them are not cultural but biological endowments (Juslin & Sloboda 2010).

Anyway, I think that in spite of particular examples and associations, the account of music expressiveness I have just presented could be applied in a general manner. I claim that what is sometimes taken as the mystery of emotions in music does not need to be found in anything else but the music.

Chapter 6

6. Responses to aesthetic experience and affective reactions to absolute music

So far we have dealt with the main theme of this work, which is explaining music expressiveness, and particularly emotive properties as (second-level) aesthetic properties of absolute music. But as I suggested in the introduction, the interest in music and the affective attachment to it also results from what the audience experiences listening to music. We feel sadness while listening to melancholic music, we may cry with gloomy music, cry with joy, jump and dance with a rhythmic song, be startled at a surprising or sudden change in the musical work, feel tension and expectation, be reminded of past experiences, projected into future actions, become relaxed, excited or nervous depending on the piece. The relation of music to the emotive life is an ancient issue in philosophy, which takes us back to Plato, Aristotle and the stoics.

Moreover, we are not just affected by music, but we even choose specific styles depending on what we are looking for: to help concentration for studying, to change our mood, to cheer up or slow down, to have fun with friends, to create a romantic atmosphere, or even encourage sexual intercourse. We are touched by music in several ways and forms, and we listen to it in our everyday life.

The effects of specific pieces of music on listeners are studied and tested empirically by experimental psychologists; there is research on how music

affects our behavior, encourages us, or pushes us to make decisions or urges potential consumers to go on a shopping spree.

Not everybody is moved by music in the same way, though. Many factors may influence the individual listener's experience: genetic factors, cultural, psychological, personal, et cetera. In this section I intend to clarify what is meant when someone is said to be emotionally moved by music, and what music carries with it in order for such emotional responses to happen.

To begin with, I want to discuss what has been taken as a paradox in regard to emotional reactions to fiction (novels, plays or films). Emotional reaction in ordinary life, involves an object for which the subject may feel something and react emotionally.¹⁰² My point here is to analyze the so called "Fiction Paradox" and the possible ways out of this problem, and see in which way it can help us to understand how and why we respond emotionally to music, and especially, to absolute music, devoid of lyrics, plot or narrative content of any sort.

6.1. The fiction paradox

In order to analyze the possible ways out of the puzzle of emotional reactions to music, I will call attention to what Radford (1975) identified as the "fiction paradox", known hereafter as "Radford's paradox", a paradoxical argument regarding our emotional reactions to fiction. I would like to highlight the fact that what is seen as paradoxical in fiction, has even possibly, stronger consequences when we consider the case of music.

It is a fact that subjects regularly exhibit apparently genuine emotional responses to characters and situations that they explicitly take to be fictional, i.e. non-existent. At first sight, there is something puzzling about our responding emotionally to stories, to made-up stories. How could this happen, given that we know those stories are fictional? This can be observed in literature, cinema

¹⁰² See Chapter 1.

or theater plays. We feel pity and cry for the fate of Anna Karenina, feel sorrow for the death of Mercutio in Romeo and Juliet or are moved by Madame Bovary's plight. The following statements seem to be simultaneously true, but if this is so, we cannot avoid a paradox. They can be stated as follows (cf. Radford 1975; Gendler & Kovakovich 2005):

- a) Readers or audiences often experience genuine emotional responses toward fictional objects (e.g. pleasure, fear, pity, sadness). This has been called "the response condition".
- b) A necessary condition for experiencing genuine emotions is that those experiencing them believe the objects of their emotions to exist, i.e., that they don't believe that the character or situation is purely fictional. This has been called "the coordination condition".
- c) Readers or audiences believe that those characters and situations are fictional, that they don't exist. This has been called the "belief condition".¹⁰³

The way out of this dilemma requires rejecting at least one of these mutually inconsistent propositions. Different solutions have been proposed.

Denial of the response condition

One possibility is to deny the response condition (a) and argue that it is not real or fully-fledged emotions that readers or audiences experience towards fictional characters or situations, but, say, *quasi-emotions*. Walton's (1978, 1990) theory is one of the most prominent of this group of solutions. He admits that in order to appreciate fiction one must think that the character or situation is fictional, that they don't exist. At the same time, he thinks that genuine emotion requires believing in the existence of what justifies this emotion, or the object of the emotion.

¹⁰³ The names used for the three conditions are to be found in Gendler (2013).

Facing these constraints, he dissolves the paradox arguing that what appear to be genuine emotions are in the context of engagement with imagined content, “quasi”, “pretended” or “fictional” emotions, that is, affective components of emotions that we *imagine* to be fully-fledged. In other words, our emotional responses to fiction, are themselves fictional, matters of pretend-play or make-belief. They differ from their corresponding actual emotion in the source (what is believed to be real versus what is believed to be fictional) and most of the time, in their motivating component, which in real emotional experiences, prompts us to act. But they share physiological (body changes) and psychological aspects (the feeling of those body changes) with genuine emotions. We may feel quasy-pity for Anna Karenina, we feel it, we may cry for her, but this does not move us to console her or to try to help her.

Denial of the belief condition

Another possibility is to deny the belief condition (c) and claim that readers or audiences of fiction temporarily cease to represent the depicted characters or situations as imaginary or fictional. This has been explained as the result of some confusion, illusion, or a “suspension of disbelief”. Such views have few adherents in contemporary philosophy, and are mostly mentioned in order to be later dismissed. (cf. Radford 1975: 302)

But for an illusion to occur, we need to be aware of what is happening, i.e., that the characters or situation are not real. Thus, the paradox remains. The “suspension of disbelief” implies that those objects are thought of as real. It seems to me improbable, except in pathological cases, that audiences or readers forget that Anna Karenina, Mercutio or Madame Bovary are not real, that those emotional objects may prompt them to action, to try to save them or help them. Moreover, believing (even temporarily) that those characters are real, we would be appalled, and it would not help explain why audiences or readers enjoy horror fiction (Carroll 1990) or negative emotional experiences in general. As Samuel Johnson writes in his Preface to Shakespeare, “The delight of tragedy proceeds from our consciousness of fiction; if we thought murders and treasons

real, they would please no more” (Johnson 1974 [1765]). Those theories seem to be at odds with the presupposition that fiction makes appreciation possible.

Denial of the coordination condition

The most prominent solution to the dilemma is the group of possibilities that rejects the coordination condition (b). It lies behind the requirement posed by cognitivists about emotions, i.e., the supposition that emotions require beliefs about the existence of characters or events that comprise the objects of those emotions. So one way out of the paradox is to deny one or some aspects of the cognitive theory of emotions, in particular, to deny that beliefs are necessary for emotions to occur. For example, it may be argued that objects we know to be fictional can stir emotional responses. It is not required to believe that the things we are moved by are actual. Versions of this sort of “thought theories” have been offered by Noël Carroll (1990), Susan Feagin (1996), Richard Moran (1994) and Jennefer Robinson (1994).

It is interesting that philosophers of the so called “thought theories” like Carroll (1990), have argued against the purely cognitivist claim in the case of fiction, and have explained that we experience genuine emotions in fiction because of the content of thought that we entertain towards a character or event. We may feel fear standing on a precipice, although security is guaranteed and no belief justifies this emotion. But the thought of falling over the edge, the mental representation of falling over, which is the content of our thought, elicits a fearful response. Likewise, in fiction. The thought of a fearsome character like Dracula is something that can be entertained without believing that Dracula exists (Carroll 1990). Both beliefs and thoughts have propositional contents, but according to Carroll, the difference is essential for emotions in fiction to make sense. Beliefs involve commitment to the truth of the proposition, whereas thoughts do not. Carroll clarifies that the content of our thoughts in fiction is not to be understood as a product of imagination, because it comes by and large from the outside. So, we don’t need to add anything from our imagination in order to find a way out of the paradox. His critique of

cognitive full blooded theories of emotions rests on the assumption that such a theory is not a comprehensive account of all the responses that people call emotions.

It could also be argued that the belief component is not necessary in emotional experiences in fiction, and say that it is not belief but some other non-object-directed mental state that is involved. It may be argued that we transform fictional characters and situations into mental representations, identifiable through descriptions derived from fictional language and its propositional contents, and that we respond emotionally to those representations or thought contents (Lamarque 2004 [1981]).

This may explain how we can respond emotionally to something we know is fictitious, to something we don't believe to exist, "belief and disbelief stay in the background when we are engaged with fiction" (Lamarque 2004 [1981]: 335). According to him, we react, for example, to the killing of Desdemona in Shakespeare's *Othello*, much as we would do to the thought of a real killing. This means that we can be moved by a thought independently of accepting it as true, and the thought and the emotion are real. The transforming of fictional characters into thoughts determines the limits of the emotional reactions, which unlike cases of real killing events, will not prompt us to act or intervene.

Some authors argue that sometimes audiences or readers empathize with the emotions in fictional characters, simulating the emotions they feel imaginatively inducing them in themselves. That's why we may come to understand Anna Karenina's behavior (Feagin 1996). An alternative option is to say that we do not feel with her, but for her (sympathize), adopting a third person's perspective (Robinson, 2004). I can feel sorry for the fate of Anna Karenina, and this happens because the author, Tolstoy in this case, makes me "feel my interest and values to be at stake in my encounter with this object of imagination, then I can respond emotionally to it ("her")" (Feagin 1996: 185).

Other anti-coordination views reject (b) on empirical grounds. Following Damasio's work on cognitive neuroscience (1997, 1999), Gendler and Kovakovich (2005) suggest that emotional engagement with imagined situations is the basis of human practical reasoning. Potential decisions are tested in imagination, rejected or accepted based on the emotional reactions to imagined outcomes.

In general, it could be questioned whether what we experience in those imagined emotional episodes are genuine emotional experiences. It seems quite obvious that there is a qualitative difference between, e.g. experiencing fear at the brainless driving of the driver of a taxi I took, which may prompt me to shout or beg him to decrease the velocity, and the representation of this situation in my imagination. I agree with the idea that those representations may help us make a better decision, or act more reasonably, when I experience something similar in real life. But this does not imply that the imagined emotional representation, or the thought content, as Lamarque calls it, is a fully-fledged emotion. Those "emotional experiences" lack any real intentional object, there is no crazy taxi driver that is believed to threaten my security, nor a situation appraised as dangerous.

6.2. The fiction paradox transposed to music

So far I have sketched a general picture of the solutions put forward for the fiction paradox by different authors. Prima facie, it looks like we could transpose it into music and try to clarify the issue of emotions in the listener as a response to music. Let's see to what extent this is possible, and if it is so, whether this transposition may help to elucidate our issue or not.

Unless we admit a pure formalist account of music, it is rare to deny that music moves us in one way or another. We often describe ourselves as being "touched," "saddened," or "exhilarated" after listening to an expressive

music-work. There is little agreement, however, on the nature of this affective reaction. Comparing to emotional experiences in real life, in the case of absolute music, there is no obvious content for which the listener may feel touched, saddened or exhilarated about. The incongruity seems bigger in the case of music if we compare it to our reactions to fictional characters, which at least are something towards which the audience may direct her emotional reaction. Be that as it may, we feel somehow moved by music too.

But as soon as we attempt to reformulate the statements of Radford's paradox for fiction in music, we realize that the equivalent of the fictional characters (or objects) of novels and plays in music is not easy to define. Remember this part of the paradox as stated previously: (a) Readers or audiences often experience genuine emotional responses toward fictional objects (response condition); (c) Readers or audiences believe that those characters and situations are fictional, that they don't exist (belief condition).

The so-called "coordination condition" (b) is nothing other than an alleged relationship between emotions and beliefs, a cognitive requirement for some theories of emotions, something that can be discussed, and which will depend on the notion of emotion we adopt. But notice that the fiction paradox holds because of the "belief condition" (c), i.e., the supposition that readers or audiences do not believe that those characters are real, together with the assumption that emotional reactions towards them occur (a). We believe that Anna Karenina is a fictional character, but we still get moved by her fate and pity her. However, in the case of music, for the belief condition (c) to make sense, we need to identify an object in music that we believe to exist (or don't) just like in fiction. It is preposterous to allege that music itself, the musical structure as an object, is the candidate for this statement. Thus, in order to transpose fairly the fiction paradox into music, we could state it as follows:

- a) Listeners often experience emotions towards the fictional objects (personae) depicted in music (response condition).¹⁰⁴
- b) A necessary condition for experiencing genuine emotions is that those experiencing them believe the objects of their emotions to exist (coordination condition).
- c) Listeners do not believe that the objects (personae) depicted in music exist (belief condition).

Behind the formulation of the paradox, there is a *sine-qua-non* condition, i.e. a presupposition without which the paradox does not hold: the idea that music represents or depicts something. Unless we attribute meaning to music and a content represented by the musical properties, we cannot state whether listeners experience emotions towards those objects, nor state they don't (admit or reject (a)). The same may be applied to the belief condition. In order to accept it or deny it, we must admit the existence of some sort of object, character, situation, or plot that music represents.

In the case of music however, especially if we limit ourselves to absolute or pure music, it is hard not only to identify fictional characters or events in it, but also to define or guess which sort of propositional content (not just beliefs) is involved in the "music-emotional episode". Listening to sad music, or music expressive of sadness, may move us, but not to sadness. In other words, if we hold a formalist account of music, statement (a) gets simpler and we should explain whether it makes sense or not to hold that listeners experience emotions, not directed towards what music means or represents, but towards music itself. I will argue later that those "music directed" emotions have a place in a formalist picture. But also that it is not the whole story. Before that, I will consider first the possibility that music has some sort of narrative content, see

¹⁰⁴ I explained the idea of the musical *persona* in chapter 1. In short, "persona theories" explain music expressiveness by assuming that we listen to expressive music as if it was inhabited by an imaginary character that expresses the emotions we hear in it.

how the paradox may be solved by this way, and analyze the problems for this view.

6.2.1. A narrativist account of music

Let us consider what I will take as a narrativist account in music. We may argue that music is not just pure form, but has a semantic content, a content beyond the pure musical features, which makes the work meaningful. A musical passage means something that the attentive listener must discover. Similarly to narrative works or pictures, novels, films or plays, music could be taken as representational and depictive of a situation or story. In Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, as the story develops, her affections and passions fluctuate, and it might be argued that in music it happens the same. If we take the analogy to an extreme, we may describe it in all kinds of detail, assigning even proper names to the characters of the plot underlying music, something that needless to say, I think has little ground.

Behind a narrativist account of music, usually lies what I have already called an arousalist conception of emotions and music. In general terms, arousal theories focus on the issue of expression in music and the arousal of emotions in the listener. Music is expressive of an emotion in virtue of its power to arouse the corresponding emotion in the listener, and expressiveness is taken as a dispositional property. Music is sad, because under normal circumstances it makes the listener sad. In the absence of such a response, music is regarded as devoid of expressive properties.¹⁰⁵

The literary analogy for absolute music has been popularly defended by the so-called persona theory of musical expressiveness. I discussed this account of music in chapter 2, and will just mention the main idea here. According to this account of music, while listening to a piece of music, the listener imagines the persona expressing her emotions in music as the externalization of her inner psychology (Levinson 1982, 1996, 2005; Robinson, 1994). A music passage

¹⁰⁵ See critiques of arousalism in Chapter 1.

might be heard as sad because the hypothetical character is imagined to be sad. At the same time, the listener responds emotionally to music, either sympathizing with the persona and feeling for her, or identifying-empathizing with the character, and feeling sad herself.

Levinson illustrates this idea with the example of the sweeping pianistic gestures in a Rachmaninoff piano concerto as they come from the very heart of the romantic hero who is the musical persona; or the movements and features (rhythmic, melodic...) of the music itself, that may represent the drooping posture of a melancholic person, for instance, or the leaping around of the joyful one. So, if we consider this account of emotions in the listener, even in the case of absolute music, which of course lacks the advantage of words, we might still explain how listeners respond emotionally to the imagined character or situation of the work, like in a novel or play.

This narrative recognition of emotions expressed in music, may lead the listener to an empathetic identification with the persona, and to “end up feeling as, in imagination, the music does” (Levinson 1982: 337-338), just as we empathize with a real person when she expresses emotions. This does not necessarily mean that the listener feels as the persona (in imagination) feels, but by imagining that she feels like the persona feels, she ends up experiencing physiological and affective components of that particular emotion in her. Sad music may evoke a kind of sadness response, and the listener may feel symptoms of sadness and an indeterminate idea that there is something or someone, the imagined persona, to be sad about. Even if we acknowledge that, those emotional responses lack a determinate intentional object, in contrast to many everyday life emotions, we may still “feel sad” listening to a piece of music, and this sadness will be directed at some “featureless object posited vaguely by my imagination” (Levinson 1982: 319-22).

It might also be argued that it is not that we empathize with the imagined persona and feel with her, but sympathize with her or feel for her. The environment that interacts with our emotions can be imagined, or just thought

(not real), and still arouse emotions. I can have emotional reactions to the contents of my thoughts or imaginings as a result of evaluating them, like I might feel sorry for Anna Karenina's fate as a result of the evaluation of her pathetic situation. But I don't need to be identified with the character (Robinson 1994, 2010). We could apply this schema to emotions aroused by music in the listener, if we consider, as previously argued, the possibility of an imagined persona embodied in music, and engage with her emotions.

Therefore the fiction paradox transposed to music, similarly to the original Radford's paradox, could be solved rejecting the coordination condition and attributing to music an imagined narrative content. Imagination takes the place of beliefs.

6.2.2. Advantages and problems of a narrativist account of music

A narrativist account may at first sight be taken as a plausible answer to how emotions in music are aroused in the listener, and at the same time avoid the downgrading of the affective experience of the listener to "lower" forms. Not committed to the truth or actual existence of the objects of emotions, narrativists see no such a problem in the alleged paradox and simply extend the emotional engagement with fictional characters and situations to the case of music.

Particularly, persona theories have a triple "advantage." They provide an explanation of music expressiveness, by means of the fictional character whose emotions are embodied in music and "tell" us what the music means. By the same token, the arousal of emotions such as joy, fear, anger or melancholy in the listener seems to be justified. There is something, someone, like in fiction, towards which listener's emotions are directed to. Intentionality is explained appealing to what music means and represents. A simple solution. Finally, the persona theory, presumably, offers an explanation to listeners' interest in music. Listeners, allegedly, recognize the emotions depicted by music and this

upgrades the musical experience to a higher level. Listening to music is seen as a way to try out in imagination a variety of affective states and learn from them, states that commonly are not found in our everyday life (Levinson 1982).

But I think that the idea of appealing to imagination to justify why we get moved *by music* is neither necessary nor right. We have seen in regard to the paradox in fiction the account given by Carroll (1990, 2003). In the examples of the precipice, and Dracula as a fictional character, Carroll explains that one may form a mental representation of falling from the precipice, without committing to the truth of the proposition. Likewise, the reader may represent the content of her thought about such a fearful character as Dracula without believing that he exists. In both cases, we may feel fear (or quasi-fear), but without appealing to our personal imagination. We don't imagine or create a thought out of nothing, as it seems this "naïve arousalist" (as Kivy (2002) calls persona-theory advocates) thesis might imply. However, in the case of music and emotions, Levinson particularly, makes too strong an appeal to imagination. According to him, for instance, I can recognize "unrequited passion" (Levinson 1982) in music's persona, imagine that I am experiencing that passion, and as a consequence feel the psychological and affective components of this passion.

Too much imagination for my liking and too little grounding in what *music itself* may offer to the listener. Robinson, after Levinson, embraces more cautiously the idea of a persona in the work that the listener of absolute music engages with, arguing that she may respond emotionally to the character of the persona in the work, interpreting the work, via music, as a psychological drama.

Non-cognitive emotional responses to music

Another way to reject the coordination condition (b) of the paradox is by denying some aspects of the cognitive theories of emotions, in particular the belief component. Just as in fiction: A way out of the dilemma in the case of music is to find a "non-cognitive" phenomenological explanation for arousal of emotions in listening to music, something that could solve the problem posed by cognitivists.

We may try to resolve the problem not only by appealing to an imagined content or thought content of the emotions in the listener, *but also* by arguing that not all emotional responses to music are cognitive, even if they are emotional. Let's take the most plausible approach. We should admit that cognitive theories of emotions are wrong, and that not all emotional experiences necessarily require cognitive processes to be involved. Disturbing passages may disturb me or reassuring ones may reassure me, as a result of a direct and non-cognitive response to the piece of music. Listeners may respond without cognitive involvement to a fortissimo bass drum in the same way we get startled by a thunderclap (Robinson 1994, 2010). Moreover, this picture of emotional reactions in the listener does not involve the rejection of the possibility that music can involve emotions with cognitive content, but just aims to stress the idea that so called "direct emotions" may reinforce more cognitively complex emotions. All in all, the expressiveness of a piece as a whole can only be grasped, according to this view, if listeners' direct feelings are aroused in such a way that they provide the clue for understanding the structure of a piece of music.

The advantages of the argument about the idea of "direct emotions" aroused by music may be considered as follows. First, the idea that direct emotions are readily elicited may at first sight seem to match our experience while listening to music. Music makes us feel relaxed or tense, disturbed or calmed down, excited and unsettled, it might make us tap our feet, or push us to dance (Robinson 1994, 2010).

Second, if we consider that emotions vary in degree and also in regard to cognitive involvement, we have no need of cognitivism's over-intellectualized involvement (that claims that attentive listeners recognize emotional properties in music as an act of perception and cognition, without having to feel them inside), to get soothed or excited by the musical form and structure. It is not mandatory to understand what is technically happening in the development of the work to feel perturbed, surprised, or whatever. Music's expressive properties may affect us directly. I don't need to hold a belief about the alleged object of

musical emotion, or require an intellectual involvement in order to be moved while listening to music.

Third, assuming this thesis we could still maintain that music arouses emotions that are somehow connected to the expressive properties in the music, and give an answer to the intuition that when I listen to “sad music”, for instance, I get “sad”.

Fourth, we could also argue that this account explains away the problem cases of resemblance accounts of music’s expressiveness discussed in previous chapters.

I think there are some useful ideas behind the position of direct emotions aroused by listening to music. In fact, “affective reactions” to musical features of the kind described above are difficult to reject if we appeal to our own experience when listening to music. What I will argue in the next section is precisely that those reactions occur, and that some of them might be derived from musical properties. A calm adagio form might make me feel calm when I listen to it.

On the other hand, if we admit these sorts of direct emotions, which are explicitly described as more primitive, less sophisticated forms of emotions by Robinson (1994), then there is no need to appeal to any imaginary content in music, or anything of this sort. The formulation of the paradox makes sense, as I anticipated before, if and only if we admit a sort of imagined content that music represents.

6.2.3. Conclusions

Notice that in any case, surpassing the purely musical boundaries in the case of emotions aroused by music is problematic and even more implausible than appealing to the composer’s alleged emotional state. Let’s consider some of those problems, and see why persona-theories or narrativist accounts of emotional reactions to music are wrong.

a) There is nothing in music that clearly points at an intentional object (except if we take music as such objects) towards which our emotional responses might be directed and justified. There is not a causal explanation for our fearful or melancholic response in the musical properties, no narrative content to hand. I may hear those emotional properties, but this does not imply I get fearful or melancholic, because there is nothing to justify those emotional reactions. Appealing to representation implies there being something beyond music that is depicted by it, like when a canvas represents a sunset in the outside world, something that, except for cases where instruments are intended to imitate auditory phenomena (birds, weeping, flowing water...), does not happen in music.

b) Narrativist views ground music's expressiveness in the listener's response.¹⁰⁶ I cannot see how this could be, if the listener's emotional response depends (at least in part) on her personal imagination. Even in the standard condition of a qualified listening experience - where the listener pays attention to the music, is familiarized with the music that she is listening to, has a minimal background knowledge about that particular musical form and grounds the appreciation of the work in what is heard in the work - there is little possibility to reach a unified conclusion about "the valid emotional response" appealing to what is suggested to the listener's individual imagining. It seems impossible to me to decide among the competing accounts of the contents imagined. In any case, it fails to explain how to detect a particular emotion, because often there is not such a big difference in the non-cognitive affective components of different emotions.

c) I don't think absolute music has the material to give a description with the power of attributing emotions or any other sort of mental states to an imagined persona. In fact, I suspect that there is nothing in music that will allow us to infer any propositional content. A piece of absolute music, lacking lyrics or titles that may suggest what the composer had in mind when

¹⁰⁶ See Chapter 1.

composing in a particular way, is a sound event, more or less charged with expressive properties that may lead the listener to hear “emotions” in the work. Music has a form, a complex sort of resource that provides it with a syntactic structure, but lacking any semantic significance. The only content, if we want to call it that, is purely musical, just sound.

d) Trying to attribute meaning to music by appealing to an imagined persona or character, may shift the direction of the emotional response from music to the listener’s particular associations, who projects into the music idiosyncratic peculiarities and this leaves music in a very poor place. I am not so much interested in the psychological wanderings of listeners, but on what *music* has to offer, respecting somehow its aesthetic autonomy.

e) Audiences often react to fictional characters’ emotional depictions, not empathically feeling like them, but just the opposite. I just want to clarify that even if we admit that the expressive properties of a music work may have a relation with the emotional response, it does not imply that listeners must feel as the music does (as Levinson argues, 1982). Listeners do not necessarily feel sad when listening to sad music.

f) Finally, as many have pointed out, were the persona theorist right, it would be hard to explain why we tend to listen to music that is expressive of negative emotions, if we assume they drive us to feel them in ourselves. Take Aristotle’s catharsis, the idea that negative expressive art results in a psychological purgation of negative emotions (Halliwell: 2006), and follow with Levinson’s explanation that negative emotions makes it possible for us to savor them, and check ourselves in a potential emotional situation of that kind (Levinson 1982). I think in any of them it remains unexplained our persistent attraction to listen to melancholic music, for example, over and over again; or prefer, and I talk now based on my personal taste, minor and diminished chords to major ones, something that not just me, but many people commonly do.

All in all, this explanation does not answer to what music is and to how we experience and appreciate it. I think the analogy of emotions aroused by fiction and by music simply does not hold.

Having dismissed narrativism and arousalism as explanations for emotions in the listener, the following approaches to the issue come to mind:

1. We may hold “somehow” the arousalist thesis and maintain that there exists a relationship between the expressive properties perceived in music and some of the listeners’ responses; but at the same time reduce the scope of the listener’s affective response to what is just “inside music” abandoning the naïve emotivists’ appeal to the persona theory.
2. We may reject the arousalist claim and search for separate answers to the issue of expression in music, on the one hand, and the emotional responses of the listener, on the other.
3. We may deny, adopting a purely formalist view, that music moves or that listeners’ emotional responses have any relevant role in music appreciation.
4. We may argue that the first and second options are both right *in part*, and find different answers to different sorts of affective reactions to music.

So far I have argued that pure or absolute music cannot be attributed to any representative or narrative content, any meaning beyond music itself and, in particular, an imagined persona or situation towards which listeners may direct their emotional response. However, the idea that music moves, and if this is so, the question of how this emotional reaction occurs, still remains unsolved.

6.3. My picture of emotions in the listener

Having argued against this possibility it is time to clarify the question of what we do mean when we say that music moves, and how it is possible, given that there is no intentional object beyond the pure musical event towards which our affective reactions are directed.

We may adopt a purely formalist approach to music and deny the emotive role in it, taking music as devoid of expressive properties, or at least posing those properties at a secondary level. Holding tightly to a cognitivist theory of emotions and also of music, we may say, on the one hand, that absolute music cannot provide the material for such an arousal of emotions to occur. And, on the other hand, that the purpose of music is neither to represent nor to arouse emotions, and if it does, claim that it is aesthetically irrelevant (Hanslick 1986 [1891]). In this view the only aspect of music relevant to its appreciation is its form, music as pure sound structure.

I think however that pure formalism does not respond to the phenomenology of our musical experiences. I think emotional engagement with the work, even if not always absolutely necessary for appreciating a work, most of the time helps to understand it better. I may appreciate the perfection in the counterpoint of a Bach fugue, its “mathematical” harmony, its complexity and craftsmanship from a purely intellectual perspective, without feeling it in my “guts”. But as soon as I recognize that it is not just a perfect composition, but a beautifully composed piece of art, emotions get involved, and this is not totally irrelevant, but may help to understand it better. I claim that listening with affection is not just a way of apprehending the work, but also that it can help in a better understanding of the music-work, provided it does not take attention away from the work in personal digressions,.

What I want to consider and explain now is that music indeed does move, and not just in a single way.

On the one hand, genuine and very intense emotions are aroused when listening to music. In fact, music moves people in a unique way. The relation of music to our emotive life acquires special relevance because many emotional episodes stimulated in the listener (also in the performer) are not found so easily in everyday life. I will argue that listening to music is such a pleasurable aesthetic experience for many of us, in great part because of this special power to move.

On the other hand, I will argue that there is another sort of affective phenomena provoked by music in the listeners. Those affective states are directly related to the emotional properties perceived in the musical event. The melancholy perceived as a result of the combination of a slow tempo, a downward melodic line and a minor chord, for instance, may prompt the listener to feel accordingly affected. What I want to clarify is that this affective reaction lacks part of what is supposed to belong to fully-fledged emotions, but it is still a mental state of an affective kind. Understanding moods as distinct from full-blooded emotions might give us a clue to explain how music's expressive properties elicit in the listener affective responses.

6.3.1. “Aesthetic emotions” in music

If we adopt a cognitivist standpoint, one that takes cognitive elements such as beliefs about the intentional object of emotion as necessary for an emotional response to occur, it seems difficult to explain how listeners respond emotionally towards music. We could think that there is no apparent reason for us to have our emotions aroused by a musical experience.

However, I think that there is a way in which the musical “object” may move us to tears, or get us carried away with joy. I am talking about the musical event itself, the object of my perception. I don't need to appeal to imagination or other contrivances, and make up an imagined persona inhabiting the music or refer to the “the composer's voice” (Cone 1974). That move is not necessary.

First, because being moved by music does not imply accepting the arousalist thesis. According to them, as I have explained before, music is described as melancholic, cheerful and so on, in virtue of making listeners, under normal conditions, melancholic, cheerful and so forth. But I think I can hear melancholy in music, without necessarily feeling melancholic afterwards. The fact that I am moved by Chopin's Ballade no. 1, has nothing to do with the arousal in me of melancholy while listening to its melancholic passages. In fact, and appealing to my own experience as listener and performer, "melancholic music", if it is beautifully melancholic, and aesthetically valuable for some reasons that I appreciate in the work, might make me cry, but not of sadness, but joy.

And second, because it is the purely musical work, the composition, the combination of form, structural elements and emergent expressive properties, that my emotions are directed to. I am not trying to argue that music expressive of sadness moves us to sadness, or that music expressive of anguish moves us to anguish, as arousalists do. There may be some truth in all this too, but that's not the point of the way of "moving" I am analyzing now. What I mean is that the aesthetic appreciation of a music work, its beauty, its technical complexity, how the development of the musical event creates expectation in the listener, the manner in which expressive properties are constructed and exhibited etc. is what moves us to awe, marvel, delight, wonder or joy. And all those affective experiences are, I think, real and genuine emotions, fully-fledged, neither quasi-emotions nor illusions. These are not emotions directed to a story, an imagined persona, or by extension, towards what a music-work is expressive of.

I feel wonder at Oscar Navarro's Concert for Clarinet and Orchestra,¹⁰⁷ and I cried when I listened to its performance a short time ago, I cried with joy, pleasure, and wonder. The core element of wonder, for instance, may be the belief that I am listening to a wonderful piece of music, and the justification for

¹⁰⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WRXfahnwtwo>. Oscar Navarro's Concert for Clarinet and Orchestra.

this belief may be found in its musical elements: the mystery induced by the subtle percussion in the introduction, the expectation produced by the instrumental unfolding of the orchestra, the masterful use of the technical possibilities of the clarinet, the passionate expressiveness of the melody, the exquisite introduction of jazzistic elements in what is a piece of classic contemporary music. There is no need to find an aboutness for my emotional state beyond what is purely musical, it is much simpler and obvious than that.

The object of musical emotion is nothing else but music. There is no need to resort to a fictional character inhabiting the music that the listener imagines as expressing her emotions. There is neither any necessity to believe those exist; as Kivy (2002: 129) says, “the object of the musical emotion (...) is the set of features in the music that the listener believes are beautiful, magnificent, or in some other ways aesthetically admirable to a high degree.” The emotion is object-directed and the belief is about something real, palpable, perceptible, that exists, a sound event. And it is precisely this emotional power that gives music its grandeur.

Currently there are two major lines of investigation in philosophy and psychology of emotions: a *feeling* centered, and a *cognitive* centered one.¹⁰⁸ There is a constant swinging from one trend to the other, but the truth is that most of the current approaches are hybrid, and involve several components from both approaches when explaining the nature and the generation of an emotion.¹⁰⁹ What is usually argued is that “musical emotions” (if they can be called so), lack any specific intentional object toward which the emotion is directed, in contrast to moods which are more general. Many things could be discussed in this regard, starting from the very definition of emotion, following with the question of whether intentionality is essential in an emotional episode or not, or wondering if that a particular object is necessary for intentionality (e.g. to be sad about the death of a friend) or whether intentionality can be

¹⁰⁸ See Chapter 1.

¹⁰⁹ For more information, see Goldie (2010) and Prinz (2002).

explained by appealing just to a formal property represented by the emotion (e.g. to be sad about an irrevocable loss).¹¹⁰

But our current case is independent of these discussions. No matter which theory of emotions we hold, it does not affect the fact that emotions, and really vivid ones, are caused listening to and appreciating music. It is not my intention to suggest that psychological theories of emotion, empirical data or neurological research cannot help understand how the aesthetic experience of an emotion happens. But what I mean is that there is no need to force the phenomenological evidence in order to fit the theory.

6.3.2. Other affective responses to music

Affective reactions to music may take several forms, and have different causes. I think that among the affective reactions provoked by music, there are other “emotional” (in a broad sense) experiences different to those previously described. I use the term “affective realm” as a generic “umbrella term” that covers different affective phenomena and processes like moods, feelings, sentiments, affective traits or emotions in the narrow sense of emotion. Before addressing the different possibilities, I’d like to make a couple of clarifications.

In my view much of the literature about emotions and music has fallen into error. The root problem is the conflation (see Levinson 1982, 1996, 2005; Robinson, 1994, 2010) of the moving character of music with the assumption that for being so, music must be able to elicit, in the listeners, what Kivy has called “the garden variety of emotions” (Kivy, 1980); that is to say, emotions such as sorrow, sadness, joy, fear, anger, despair, hope et cetera. Moreover, they need to explain how it is possible for this to happen, and also why it is possible that listeners seek musical experiences that cause negative emotions like

¹¹⁰ See Prinz, 2004, for further discussion about this topic.

sadness or despair; and for that, they often draw upon psychological theories and experimental data about emotions aroused while listening to music.¹¹¹

In the next two sections, I leave behind what I called “aesthetic emotions” to focus on those other affective reactions to music. I am referring to the affective responses produced when listening to specific expressive properties in music. My aim is to clarify the nature of those responses, the nature of “becoming sad” while listening to sad music, or “becoming cheerful” while listening to cheerful music. I will analyze several possibilities and present my conclusions.

6.3.2.1. Quasi-emotions and “weaker” emotions

In the case of absolute or instrumental music, as we have already seen, there is nothing right there for which I may feel emotional, nothing beyond the purely musical event. There is nothing real or imaginary, for which I may feel sad, angry or fearful about when listening to sad, angry or fearful music. However there seems to be a relation between the emotional properties music is expressive of, and the affective reaction of the listeners, a reaction that rises up directly from the perceived musical properties. Are listeners confused when they describe their experiences in emotive terms? Or do they interpret those experiences as something that they really are not? How can it be explained?

A way out of this puzzle is to claim that what listeners feel in a musical experience are not genuine emotions. As we have seen, when we say that “this music makes me sad”, holding to cognitivist constraints, we cannot take this “sad state” as genuinely emotional, especially if we deal with absolute music. It shares probably some of the affective components of genuine sadness, but lacks others. In this section, I will consider three modes of understanding this idea.

1. One possibility that deserves consideration is the claim that listeners’ responses to music cannot be categorized as fully-fledged emotions, but

¹¹¹ A similar criticism is explicitly made by Kivy (1990, 2012) and I endorse it for the present purposes, but just in part, as I will argue in subsection 6.3.3.

quasi-emotions. The term “quasi” refers in general to something that shares some but not all the features of a kind, something that is neither paradigmatic nor genuine.

However, in the case of music and emotions, this term, in parallel to emotions in fiction, has been adopted to refer to physiological and psychological states that being similar to real emotional states, we imagine to be fully-fledged, by a play of “make-belief” (Walton 1990). In the case of absolute music, the role of imagination becomes more significant than in fiction because there is nothing behind that which we pretend to be real. The idea of “make-believe” when listening to music makes Schiller’s metaphor of art as play, literal and precise. This idea of quasi-emotion makes expressive music the cause of imaginative perceiving and imaginative introspection. The listener imagines herself experiencing emotions, sentiments or moods like excitement, passion, fervor, despair etc. when listening to music. This psychological participation creates quasi-emotions, so music is expressive in virtue of the fact that listening to it we are aware of our feelings and states of mind (Walton 1988).

2. We could also argue that the idea of quasi-emotions doesn’t necessarily imply imagination, and that they are emotion-like in that, simply, they are not full-blooded or lack some component of genuine emotional responses, like a particular intentional object and/or a motivating component that move us to react.

At the end of the day, the important thing is not the label we stick to our response (quasi-emotions or any other), but what we understand by it. Thus, the “imagine version” of the idea of quasi-emotions in music is not convincing. I don’t think that the emotional experience resulting from listening to expressive music is imaginary. When the response depends on the listener’s imagination, music expressiveness has little to say. We perceive emotions in music as perceptual properties in it, derived from its musical features and accompanied, sometimes, by emergent expressive properties. It is not the case that we create a “fake-emotional” or pseudo-emotional” state, or as Walton puts it a

“constellation of sensations” (Walton, 1990). I claim that, although we may not experience such emotions in a full-blooded sense, we are truly affected and moved listening to music.

Let’s take an example. When I listen to the first passage of Rachmaninoff’s Piano Concerto number 3,¹¹² I hear the short oscillatory introduction in D minor of the orchestra that paves the way to an exquisite piano solo opening theme. The delicate expressiveness of that passage helps the listener perceive a sentient plea, with a hint of sorrow. As the movement develops, it reaches ferocious climaxes, especially at the cadenza, helped by the explosion of the pianistic chord sections and overlapping figures-of-eight in left and right hand. I hear those expressive features in music, in how it exhibits them.



Rachmaninoff, Piano Concerto No 3 in D minor, Op, 30. Beginning of the main theme and portion of the cadenza.

This expressive power is caused by the combination of *purely musical elements*. I don’t find it necessary to appeal to imaginary introspection and claim that music induces me to imagine myself in a state of sorrow and entreaty in order to justify why I get affected by this listening experience. The emotional

¹¹² https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MOOfoW5_2iE. Rachmaninoff, Piano Concerto No 3 in D minor, Op, 30

properties are simply heard, and can be described by a more or less technical description. I believe that there must be another explanation about how and why the expressive properties of music drive us to correspondent affective states, a more satisfactory explanation than the imaginary mode described in the previous point.

Moreover, appealing to imaginative introspection leaves no way to decide which of the competing accounts of the imagined state is correct. Again, I want to stress that appealing to listeners imaginative capacity, distorts the intrinsic expressive power of music, and deviates the emotional experience of the listener from an aesthetically concerned perspective, to psychological accounts that are irrelevant to the issue of this thesis.

However, if we get rid of that particular interpretation of “quasi-emotion” (Walton’s imaginative version) that I have explained above, I think the concept could broadly explain the nature of our emotional experience with music, given that our emotional responses to the expressive properties of music are not fully-fledged and lack some of the affective components that an ordinary emotional experience have.

3. An alternative to quasi-emotions is admitting a sort of mirroring response to music expressiveness without appealing to imagination or compromising with ideas that may suggest (like Walton does in his parallelism with fiction) a depictive-representational approach to emotions in music. We may argue that the resulting emotional response is different in that it lacks an emotional object and that the perceptual object (the musical event) is what triggers or causes the affective reaction, without implying it is the object of our reaction. In other words, our emotional response would not be directed at the perceptual object, but on the contrary this would be the cause of our reaction.

This “weaker version” of emotions (defended by Davies 1994) may sound a bit blurred or undefined, but I think it suggests interesting ideas. First, it rejects the idea that music describes (like language) or depicts (like pictures) something else. In other words, divesting the idea of music representing

anything else, we also avoid falling into the trap of looking for properties it does not possess. Second, I think it is important to distinguish the intentional object of an emotional response with the cause of it. We could compare it with, when in real life we witness an emotional episode and the perception of this event unleashes as if by contagion an affective process in our system, echoing that episode in us, but not because I feel for the characters of the event (they are not the objects of my emotional response). In the case of music, the ability to describe emotions is located within itself. In Davies' (1994) words, music presents the "aural appearance" of what he calls emotions' "characteristics". Similarly, our mirroring response to music's expressiveness echoes the expressive appearance of its perceptual properties.

Following this argumentative line, we could add that the mental representation of the perceived event (the musical event and its particular features, the tempo, the pattern of rhythms, the harmony, the key etc.) elicits bodily responses as well as a mental process with the result of detecting traces of the perceived emotional properties in the hearer.¹¹³ If this is right, we could say, that music does not represent emotions, but rather that emotional properties perceived in music (purely musical features) are mentally represented by the listener and that this elicits the affective process.

6.3.2.2. Feelings and moods elicited by the expressive properties of music

We have seen that endorsing a cognitive theory of emotion poses some constraints on the notion of emotion, and that those constraints make it difficult to explain how emotions are aroused by music in the listener.¹¹⁴ I will

¹¹³ I borrow here explanations developed by some theorists of emotions like Prinz, 2004.

¹¹⁴ Despite the many ways to understand cognitivism, all cognitive theories of emotions hold that emotions possess cognitive states directed at objects that are subsumable under some general criteria (as the object of an occurrent episode of fear meets the necessary condition of harmfulness). This idea has been recently reformulated as "appraisal", understood (see Lazarus 1991; Kivy 2004: 14) as "evaluations of what one's relationship to the environment implies for one's well being". The identity of a particular emotion is defined by a pattern of appraisal giving rise to them: the core relational theme. Example: anger as a demeaning offense against me. All in all, the idea of intentionality and

argue that it is not necessary to violate those constraints in order to explain how listeners are “moved” as a response to music’s expressive properties. I will show that other feeling charged responses, rather than properly emotional ones, comprise the characteristics of the affective responses to music, and avoid the problems mentioned in what we have been discussing up to now.

I have already argued that absolute music cannot arouse the garden variety of emotions, not at least in a full-blooded form, because it is devoid of narrative, conceptual or representational content. We cannot get angry in virtue of perceiving music expressing properties of anger or sad in virtue of perceiving sad properties.¹¹⁵ But I want to show that music induces moods in different ways and that some of those moods satisfy our required conditions. I also claim that this approach is compatible with a cognitive theory of emotions and a formalist account of music’s expressiveness, and that it may explain our intuition of being moved to a particular affective tone when listening to music.

For this purpose, I need to consider the following issues:

1. The evidence that shows that music can engender moods or similar affective reactions in the listener, in virtue of perceiving the corresponding emotive properties that music is expressive of.
2. A plausible explanation for the hypothesis that those moods are elicited by the expressive properties perceived in music, and not otherwise.
3. Whether among the mood states elicited by music, some of them (at least) may be considered as complementary to an attentive listening of the music work, *qua* art, *qua* music, i.e. independent of listener’s particular imaginative recreations or other extra musical purposes.

To begin with, I must admit that there is plenty of evidence that shows that music can affect people’s moods. Music is used in therapy to arouse

evaluation are essential in cognitive theories. This cognitive process results then in bodily or somatic changes, feelings and action tendencies.

¹¹⁵ I agree with Kivy’s formalism at this point.

positive mood states and other cognitive predispositions; as a tool in marketing to encourage shopping; as a mode of arousing spirituality; as an effective way to evoke calm, anxiety, gloom or happiness in movies; as a way to encourage athletes and soldiers; to encourage group cohesion; as a torture instrument, and in many other ways. It seems obvious that in one way or another, with more or less cognitive implication, music has the power to channel people's affective states and reactions. But how could this happen? Where does music's power reside? And if this is so, are those affective responses the result of an attentive listening, i.e., do they have any relevant aesthetic significance?

What we need to find is an explanation of how music triggers those affects in the listener. I don't intend to prove that music has the machinery to elicit all kinds of mood, in the same way that music cannot be expressive of just any emotion (see chapter 1). Mood states elicited by music in this way may be of less intensity and duration compared with moods generated by life conditions. In fact, despite cases in which the listener has a previous tendency to feel in a particular way, they are usually transitory states, that may be modulated and altered even along the listening experience of the same work.

A Sonata form for example, composed of three or four movements depending on the period, allows the listener to experience different tempos and emotive tones in what has been composed as a unitary work. Beethoven's Sonata no. 8 in C minor, op. 13, evolves from the Grave and its tragic spell and dramatic changes, to the famously expressive Adagio Cantabile, driving the listener through an atmosphere of lyric calm and serenity. After this parenthesis, the Rondo-Allegro sounds nervous again, with brio, reminiscing in some passages the general tone of the Sonata.

The image displays the opening bars of three movements from Beethoven's Sonata no. 8 in C minor, op. 13. The first movement, 'Grave', is in 3/4 time and begins with a piano (fp) dynamic. The second movement, 'Adagio cantabile', is in 2/4 time and starts with a piano (p) dynamic. The third movement, 'Allegro', is also in 2/4 time and begins with a piano (p) dynamic. The score is written for piano and includes various dynamics and articulations.

Beethoven' Sonata no.8 in C minor op 13.¹¹⁶ Opening bars of the three movements.

I think there are different ways of listening to music, in the same way that there are different sorts of appreciation, and we should not discredit the less cognitively involved modes before appraising their aesthetic relevance. Following the critique made by Feagin (2010) to the over intellectualization of some formalist theorists, I disagree with the idea that the only aesthetically involved mode of listening to music is the exclusively cognitive one. Moreover, listening with feeling may help a better apprehension, although at other times it may divert one's attention from what is properly music to other sort of experiences and personal digression.

¹¹⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cg9KQ61obiU>. Beethoven' Sonata no.8 in C minor op 13.

Listening to music attentively, we may perceive how it exhibits particular emotional properties via the sonic resources that the author used in the composition. By means of that music's intrinsic properties, the composer will try to "play" with the listener. How this recognition is possible has been discussed at length in the previous chapter. I recall that perceiving the resemblance between the dynamic character of music, and the human body's expression, movement, gait, bearing, or modulation of the human voice when expressing particular emotions, plays the central role. Those emotional traces are heard in the work, and its expressive properties perceived "in appearances" (Davies 1994), or as "contour" (Kivy 1980). There is nothing and no one there expressing her emotions. Music expressiveness is the perceptual object and the cause, but not the intentional object of the affection elicited in the listener, because as Davies says "musical expressiveness is neither believed nor imagined to answer to the appropriate formal-object-description" (Davies 1994: 301).¹⁷ Moods elicited by music have a perceptual object but not any particular emotional object.

But how do we move from here to the elicitation of parallel affective reactions in us? My argument is as follows.

Emotions often share feeling components with thematically corresponding moods. My heart beat may race up when I get angry during an argument, in a similar fashion to when I am in an anxious mood without a particular reason in hand, perhaps with just the accumulation of a number of minor problems. The only explanation I can find, without resorting to what happens in our brains when such affective reactions occur, is that the perception of certain musical features combined together, like a particular tempo, the harmonic structure, the melodic line, the rhythmical patterns or the combination of different timbres, in the case of an orchestral composition,

¹⁷ Remember Prinz's distinction between the particular object (the event, the cause) and the formal object (what the emotion represents) of an emotion.

triggers certain feeling states in our system, affectively charged and bodily sensed.

In the case of the aforementioned example, my stomach contracts as the introductory grave bars of Beethoven's Sonata develop, I take air when it seems the tension will disappear. But suddenly, the Allegro con Brio attacks, and startled, my blood pressure increases, and I prepare for further surprises. I feel restless. Finally, the resolution of the first tempo gives me goose bumps (and I may cry with joy, but this is another matter). I think that the pleasure we take when we are moved by music in this way is reflected in our nerve endings, and has an impact in our bodies, and that's why we often experience a musical passage as a feeling in our guts.

I would say that the dynamic and temporal nature of music is one of the major music levers in regard to feeling responses. Music is perceived as a continuum, as the musical structure being unfolded through time. I think that this feature of music encourages the involvement of the listener in the artistic process. A sudden change in the tempo for instance, or an instant of silence just after an energetic chromatic explosion of notes, may change completely the appreciation of a musical passage, and impact on the listener in an unexpected way. What triggers our affective response is not an atomic element, but the specific combination of all of them.

This property of music is what makes it especially expressive, and drags the listener into its trap, creating expectation along the way, and making her shake and quiver. In all likelihood, music's dynamic nature, its intrinsic relation with time (the rhythm, tempo, measure, cadences) is what activates affectively charged reactions in the listener. It is a fact that music moves us "emotionally" (in its broad sense) as well as physically. As Carroll points out, when we describe music movement as "speeding up and slowing down, rising and falling, pushing, plodding, going against the tide..." (2003:548) we may not only be describing the musical passage, but how the music sounds and feels to us.

Nothing else but the object of my perception, an expressive music-work and all its machinery is what has elicited this feeling process. My mind has registered the perceived stimuli and is doing its part. The feelings and somatic and physiological components registered are presumably associated with a mood or class of moods in our brains. The affective process leaves me in a state of excitement and restlessness, and this particular mental state may contribute to the activation or modulation of my attention to, and awareness or appraisal of what surrounds me.

The affective traces after listening to a beautifully expressive music-work, even though they don't last long, leave in the listener a special flavor, one that cannot be found so easily in other emotive experiences of everyday life. I find it almost impossible to listen to a piece of this sort without affective involvement, of one kind or another, at least if we are "listening" to it, and not using the piece as a mere soundtrack.¹¹⁸

In this particular case, I claim that this affective process, less cognitively involved on its own, a bit visceral at first sight, if we want to call it like this, may be the perfect complement to what Kivy calls "a canonical case of music listening" (2009: 93). I consider that this humble explanation of how feeling processes and mood states are elicited, responds to the issues considered at the beginning of this subsection. Back to Beethoven's Sonata, we can affirm that:

(1) They are triggered or caused by the perception of the formal, structural and expressive qualities of the music work.

(2) The listener's attention has been focused on this piece of music and its development over time, appreciating it *qua music*, qua an artistic piece that deserves attention.

(3) The experience has not been corrupted by the listener's particular imaginings, fictional personae or idiosyncratic associations of any sort,

¹¹⁸ I refer to the two ways of getting moved developed in this dissertation, namely the "aesthetic emotions" and moods.

that are not part of the music, and also that the motivation or the attitude was not either to change or modulate a mood, as if there is a magic pill, but one of enjoyment and pleasure at an artistic work.

I want to clarify that affective reactions to music of the sort described may be less cognitively charged than what I have called the “aesthetic” ones, not so far from those “direct emotions” that Robinson talked about. We allow ourselves to be driven by feelings, but even so, they are not devoid of cognition. Attention and evaluation of what is heard are probably involved in the affective process. Moreover, the question here is not to defend one way of being moved by music against the other. On the contrary, both are complementary.

I disagree with the idea defended by Kivy that the only relevant way in which music moves are what I called the “aesthetic emotions” (Kivy, 1990, 2002, 2009). A listener may decide to listen to a piece of rock music not because she wants to have a pure and contemplative aesthetic experience, but because the properties of the song makes her dance and bring her a positive mood. There is no need to divide the mind in two, or discriminate against one of them. If someone likes music, appreciates good music, enjoys the aesthetic pleasure this experience offers, and is predisposed to listen to it in that particular moment, both modes of listening can go together, simultaneously, and this co-reaction may help to an even better understanding of the work and apprehension of its expressive properties.

Chapter 7

7. Conclusions

It is less than four years ago that this story began. I love music and also philosophy. I am a musician myself and have been teaching philosophy for many years, but I would never have thought that one day both paths should converge. I was finishing my Master courses when I decided on a topic for the final dissertation. Talking with the professor I had back then for the course “Language and Art” I decided that the research topic had to do with both music and philosophy. And here I am now, tired but satisfied at having (almost) finished this research project at a moment of my life when things are quite complicated. However, I have enjoyed it and I would like to keep on enjoying it for a long time to come. But I haven’t finished yet and the blinds are about to be lowered.

We started with a puzzle, the puzzle of expression in music, in particular the expression of emotions in absolute music, that is, music devoid of lyrics, plots or program of any sort. It is challenging to explain the role of emotion here. That seemed quite clear from the beginning.

I have explored different accounts of music expressiveness. Some explained expression in music by appealing to the imaginative capacity of listeners, to music’s power to evoke and arouse emotive states in them, or the passionate composer that created the composition. At the other end of the spectrum, “hard-core” formalism denied any place for emotion in music, arguing that music is pure structure, formal patterns of sound where emotions cannot inhabit any of its guises. After reviewing them, I arrived to the conclusion that none of them offered an adequate account of the phenomena that I was really

looking at: to explain what is meant when we say that this song *is* sad or that passage *is* anguished.

So the first conclusion I reached is that the answer to the puzzle needs to be found *in music*, in the potential of music to house emotions as something we can perceive.

I contend that we “hear emotions” as perceptual properties of music, that those properties have a legitimate place in it and are part of its nature. We don’t hear in music anybody in particular crying with sadness, or screaming full of anger. What we perceive, hear, is the appearance of emotions as they are ordinarily expressed, as outer manifestations shaped in patterns of sound. Music does not “possess” emotions in a literal sense, but exhibits emotive properties.

After analyzing the uses of the term “expression” I decide that Tormey’s label of “X expression” is that which fits best to the case of music. A sad expression does not entail somebody’s feeling sad, in the way that the Saint Bernard dog’s sad expression does not entail that the dog is sad. In a similar way a prelude of Debussy is sad, that is to say, it is so in virtue of some outward musical features that are in its musical structure. So I argue for a cognitivist point of view with regards to music’s expressive properties, and hold that a broader notion of “expression” accommodates such properties perfectly.

I think then, that music is not expressive in a metaphorical sense and that the terms we apply to expressive properties are not used figuratively. When we attribute fury to a Beethoven symphony we are perceiving fury, which is no more than a complex combination of musical elements. And this combination can be analyzed. But it is not a simple task. The expressive properties of music are not to music, like colors are to material things. Music’s expressive features are there in virtue of other elements that can be identified, a complex agglomeration of musical elements. Of course, the composer, if she is good and successful to carry out what she intends, avail of the potential of music and shape the sound accordingly. The expressive character of music does not come

out of nothing, but is created thanks to all those little elements that someone has shaped and ordered.

The account I adopt, grounds on a formalist view of music, “formalism revisited,” drawing on the work of philosophers like Peter Kivy and Stephen Davies to whom I owe so much. I am more and more convinced that music is essentially formal, abstract and structural, and that its virtues have to be found in this particular nature and nowhere else. I hold, however, that the expressive power of music adds aesthetic value to it, and that accepting that fact, does not entail underestimating musical form. In fact its expressive power, I argue, emanates precisely from its formal structure.

The biggest challenge is to find an account that answers *how* the formal features of music and its expressive properties are related. Not only that, but it is also important to explain how it is that we perceive some expressive features and not others in a composition. And here, I admit, there is much work to do yet. Mine is just a small step.

First, I argued that emotive, and expressive properties of artworks in general and in absolute music in particular, are one among various types of second-level aesthetic properties. I describe them as “aesthetic” because they are qualities of the work that add value to it. They are structural and phenomenological properties of the work; sensuous features for which taste is required in order to recognise them. Here I point to the difference between aesthetic and non-aesthetic properties of artworks. The reason is that whereas in other artistic genres the meaning, the message or the moral of the work counts towards its artistic evaluation, this is not the case for absolute music. In absolute music, however, that which is artistically relevant is the music-work’s aesthetic properties plus its dispositional properties, which count as non-aesthetic but art-relevant properties.

The discussion of Sibley on “aesthetic concepts” and Kivy’s sharp reflections on the matter, lead me to consider what is the place of expressive and particularly emotive properties, among the aesthetic properties of artworks in

general. I proposed a general classification first, and I applied it afterwards to the case of music.

I contended that the aesthetic properties we attribute to artworks can be classified according to two different levels. First-level properties are the perceptual elements that constitute a work, the base on which second-level properties depend. When we attribute delicacy, anguish, turbulence or any other such property, the ground of such attributions needs to be found in those structural elements.

Second, I contended that the relation of first and second-level properties is one of supervenience of the latter upon the former. Thus, second-level aesthetic properties are phenomenological properties that are perceived as simple, though they are complex agglomerations of first-level aesthetic properties on which they supervene (with the possible exception of *relational* properties, as we saw in Chapter 3). The turbulence perceived in a Van Gogh's painting is the result of a combination of "physical" features and techniques. The melancholy heard in Chopin's compositions is the result of a complex and intricate combination of musical features. Despite the dependence of emotive qualities on other more technical musical features, we hear them as distinct qualities, separated from those features on which they supervene.

Among second-level properties I propose a subdivision also. I don't intend to take it as an absolute classification. It is one amongst others. But I think it sheds some light on our purpose, that is to understand the place of emotive properties in music. What I call "feeling properties" like *energetic*, *relaxing* or *tender*, and emotive properties like *melancholic*, *joyful* or *fearful* correspond to the class of expressive properties. My point here is that understanding the nature of emotive properties in music, is quite similar to understanding the nature of other complex properties.

The big challenge comes when we have to explain *how* it is that music has such potentiality, and find the properties in virtue of which a musical work is expressive of specific emotions. I claim that this power is to be found in its

genuine musical machinery, the dimensions of which a sound event is shaped, and the features that “give life” to it. Harmony, rhythm and melody are the fundamental aspects of music, but timbre, dynamics, tempo, and texture are very important too.

Included in what I called the emotional machinery, I have tried to identify the features that, in being combined in particular ways, can exhibit traces of what humans take as emotional characteristics. For this purpose, I have adopted a resemblance account of music expressiveness, the idea that music is perceived as expressive due to the resemblance of some musical features to human outer expressive “contour” or behavior.

The first difficulty a resemblance account must face is that those similarities between people’s movements, voice, gestures, facial expression or gaits are not obviously identified in music. I have attempted to compare the way in which some musical aspects like rhythm, tempo, tone, dynamics, etc. shaped in structured sound, with the way people express emotions.

I have also pointed to the most “obscure” element concerning this issue: harmony. I have not yet found a satisfactory explanation, beside conventional matters, of why we tend to hear some modes and harmonic structures as expressive of some emotion types, rather than others. I think there is much research to be done in this regard.

Just a final consideration in regard to emotions in music. Saying that music is able to exhibit emotions, and that we may recognize them as emerging from its purely musical properties, does not imply that we can hear, recognize any sort of emotion, in any way. I think that the criteria must be found in what is apparent in central cases of genuine, human emotional responses, in that some emotions have outward identifiable characteristics, and some of them can be exhibited by the combination of different musical properties.

Finally, I have dedicated a chapter to something I would like to research in more depth: the responses to music’s expressive properties. I introduced this

section explaining what is known as the Fiction Paradox (or Radford's Paradox). The puzzle of how audiences respond emotionally to fictional characters or situations, knowing that they don't exist, i.e. that they don't even *fictionally* exist, *results* in particular consequences in the case of absolute music. I conclude that what listeners normally feel when listening to music are not genuine or fully-fledged emotions. I have considered different theories that try to justify in one way or another that there is reason to say that we get sad listening to sad music, or cheerful listening to cheerful music. I have argued that they are wrong, and I have based the argument for that in a cognitive notion of emotions. I claim that behind emotions, there is thought, appraisal of the situation, motivation, attention, and most of the time also beliefs. However, I am not denying that music moves.

In fact, and this is the core idea of this issue, I think that music moves basically in two distinct ways.

What I have called "aesthetic emotions", are real, full-blooded emotions, and fulfill all the requirements to be so. Their emotional object is nothing other than the music-work. Beliefs, judgments, attention, cognition, but also feeling and body components are involved and directed to what attentive listeners appreciate as valuable and beautiful. I remark that these "aesthetic emotions" don't need to be exclusive to an ideal listener, an expert in the particular genre, or a well-versed individual. The fact that someone may not be able to describe the object (perceptual) in technical or properly musical terminology does not mean that proper "aesthetic emotions" cannot be heard by them.

With regard to this sense of understanding how music moves us, I totally agree with Kivy's account. In fact, I guess, the power of music to trigger such full and deep emotions, as Byron says in his poem, is what makes music almost magical and terribly attractive and pleasurable. Our interest in music may lie in part in that music unleashes in the listener (and also in the performer) many emotional episodes that are not found so easily in everyday life.

On the other hand, I think Kivy's enhanced formalism fails to explain why listeners tend to feel appropriate emotions to the emotional properties heard in music. I do not think that the garden variety of emotions, as Kivy calls them, may be aroused listening to expressive music. But I must admit that other parallel affective responses occur listening to music expressive of emotional properties. There exists a relationship between the expressive properties perceived in music and some of the listeners's responses. The difficult question is to explain *how* it is that music has such force and scope; how music gets the listener to catch its affective mode and be affected by it in a similar direction. But we should also explain *why* listeners choose to be affected by it, probably more frequently and extensively than in any other artistic form.

Bearing in mind the differences between moods and genuine emotions I have argued that the affective reactions to music's expressiveness match with moods. In a sense, moods are quasi-emotions, if we take the idea of "quasi" to refer to something that shares some but not all the features of a type. If we take quasi-emotions as affective states devoid of some emotional constituents (like beliefs, or particular intentional objects, for example), I have no problem in defining emotive reactions to music as quasi-emotions.

I have pointed out that there is a strong relation in the emotive features we perceive in music and our affective reaction. The perception of certain musical features combined together, the tempo, the harmonic structure, the melody or rhythm, triggers certain feeling states in our system, affectively charged and bodily sensed. I have stressed too that the dynamic and temporal nature of music, is one of the major levers with regard to feeling responses.

I think the explanation, the answer to the "how" question, must be found in the perceiving of those specific features, a particular rhythmical pattern, sudden tempo changes, or intense dynamics, we represent them in our mind, and somehow relate the perceived property (or combination of properties unfolded in the music work) with physiological or somatic features characteristically associated with particular affective reactions, moods or classes of mood in our

brains. My intuition about how to explain those sorts of affective reactions to music follows this line.

Finally, I claim that listening with affection, with emotive involvement of one or other sort, may help to better appreciate and understand the music-work, and at the same time, make the aesthetic experience of listening to music, pleasurable and incomparable.

I do not see this thesis as the end of my research work. Just the opposite: I think of it as just the beginning. First, my most immediate tasks consist in filling in the lacunas of the present work. I have to systematize and complete the taxonomy of second-level aesthetic properties of art, in general, and of absolute music, in particular.

Second, this work has been almost exclusively devoted to the *analysis* of artworks and music. I said very little about *interpretation* and *evaluation*. This has been a natural consequence of having limited my attention to pure or absolute music, which, as I repeatedly said, lacks any representational content, and, thus, has few non-aesthetic artistically relevant properties (I have tentatively included only *dispositional* properties in that category). The next step appears clear then: to add gradually extra-musical elements like title, lyrics, acting and see how each of these elements affect the interpretation and evaluation of these sorts of hybrid or *impure* music-works.

A third future line of research that I hope to pursue in collaboration with other researchers at the Institute has to do with the intimate connection between music and dance. The expressiveness of music gets altered when combined with dance's expressiveness, and perhaps, vice versa—or, who knows, there might be an asymmetrical dependence of dance on music. There is much to discuss with dance specialists.

A fourth important connection I would like to dig into concerns the role that music plays in contemporary Western movies. Music's expressiveness contributes to the movies' capacity of moving the audience, that seems pretty

clear. Again, the interesting question is how, but also what other roles music plays and why.

I intend to pursue all these lines in the future or, at least, some of them, while I go on teaching philosophy to young women and men and playing the piano in a rock band. I may be a little optimistic, but that's how I ended up here: pretty much ignoring limitations of time and space.

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