
1. France Veber (1890-1975), who has been called the father of modern (i.e. non-scholastic) philosophy in Slovenia, was a student of Alexius Meinong in Graz from 1912 to 1917. Meinong exerted a strong and lasting influence on Veber who never gave up the psychologico-phenomenological or gegenstandstheoretische approach to philosophical problems although his late work, with its religious emphasis, was rather different in spirit from his early work to which *Estetika* belongs.

There is a very simple explanation for the fact that Veber is very little known: he wrote all his main works in Slovene, a language with about two million speakers in the northernmost part of Yugoslavia. I have been told that his books are not easy reading even for native Slovenes because Veber inherited from Meinong not only his general philosophical standpoint but also his complicated and rather long-winded style.

2. Veber’s *Estetika* was published for the first time in 1925. It has been said that it is the best book by Veber but certainly it is not the easiest for the reader. To understand it, one should be well versed either in Meinong’s or in Veber’s own philosophy.

In this paper I will concentrate on two central topics in Veber’s book: (1) on the theoretical foundations of the analysis of aesthetic experience expounded in the Introduction and Part One of the book (pp. 22-213), and (2) on Veber’s defence of the objectivity of aesthetic value (Introduction and Part Three). I will have relatively little to say about the deduction of aesthetic categories (Part Two) and nothing about the nature of art (Part Four).

3. To understand Veber’s *Estetika* it is necessary to start from outside the book itself. He takes it for granted that the reader knows the basics of his psychology (or phenomenology or theory of objects). In this section I will supply this background information. (And so does the editor of the second edition of *Estetika*, Prof. Frane Jerman, in his Accompanying Words at the end of the book, pp. 556-573).

Like his teacher, Veber divides mental phenomena into four classes: (1) representations (*predstave*), (2) thoughts (*misl*) that are further divided into judgments (*trditvi*) and assumptions (*dopustivi*), (3) feelings (*čustva*) and (4) desires (*stremljenja*). Classes (1) and (2) belong to cognitive (*umski*), (3) and (4) to emotional (*nagonski*) mental phenomena.
The cognitive and the emotional phenomena have different roles in human behaviour. To put it bluntly, it is the job of the emotional phenomena to put man into motion and that of the cognitive states to direct this motion by giving information about the external world.

The difference between representations and judgements is very important for Veber. He uses it on several occasions, and it can be summarised in three theses: (1) Representations are passive, judgements are active mental phenomena (83). (2) Representations have simple non-propositional objects, while judgements (and thoughts in general) have complex propositional objects which Veber calls facts (89, 96, 150). (3) There is no polarity in representations but there is the polarity of affirmation and negation in judgements (83, 471-4).

4. Veber follows Brentano and Meinong in holding that intentionality is an essential feature of mental phenomena: “Every thought is ... necessarily directed to some object...” (22). This holds true not only of thoughts but also of representations, desires and feelings.

Like Brentano, Veber takes the following two expressions to say essentially the same thing: ‘A mental phenomenon X is intentional’ and ‘Either X is a representation or contains a representation as its part’.

For instance, a judgement is intentional because it contains a representation. It is impossible to judge, say, that the table is green without at the same time having a representation of the green table. The same is true of feelings and desires: one cannot feel or desire without feeling or desiring something; and this something is given by the representation which is part of the feeling or desire.

Veber, following his predecessors, calls the representation that is included in the judgement, feeling or desire the psychological foundation (podlaga) of the judgement, feeling or desire. There cannot be any mental phenomenon that either is not a representation itself or does not have a representation as its foundation.

Thus far Veber has followed Brentano and Meinong faithfully. Now begins his original contribution.

5. Feelings (čustva, also translatable by ‘emotions’) have a prominent role in Veber’s value-theory in general and aesthetics in particular. He maintains that values (both moral and aesthetic) are, as it were, perceived through feelings or emotions. Just as sensations perceive shapes and colours, so emotions “perceive” values. (This is the essence of Meinong’s doctrine of emotional presentation which he, according to some Slovenian interpreters, learnt from his pupil Veber who dealt with this topic in his doctoral dissertation).