

rent state of the debate on the mind/body problem, and Hannay's styles does not spare his readers the effort of working hard to discern the structure of his argumentation.

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Music Alone, Philosophical Reflections on the Purely Musical Experience, by Peter Kivy. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990. Pp. xii + 226.

Written in a very readable style, Kivy's book concentrates on a set of closely related problems raised by so-called pure music—that is, music which is independent of non-musical representation, such as a text, a title or a program—and offers an intelligent analysis of the experience of such music. The argumentation is straightforward, often convincing and, above all, cautiously conscious of its limits—at the very end of the book, Kivy admits that the account of musical profundity he favours does in fact suffer from recalcitrant problems. A wealth of illuminating musical examples as well as thorough musicological knowledge permeate the text. The argument is enriched by the fact that the author discusses and makes use of works which have been all too often neglected, such as Descartes' *Compendium of Music*, Johann Mattheson's *Vollkommen Capellmeister* or Rousseau's *Essai sur l'origine des langues*.

Kivy rightly rejects both the view that pure music stimulates pleasure much in the same way as drugs cause euphoria and the view that even pure music is a representation, be it of the human voice, of the will or of music itself. The former he claims to be guilty of ignoring that the pleasure we take in listening to music is directly related to musical understanding, whereas understanding drugs—and by this is meant knowing their nature (and not having experienced their effects)—has no relation whatsoever to their effect and, in particular, never enhances such effects. He rejects the latter view mainly on the grounds that it does not yield what it promises, namely, an explanation of the satisfaction music offers. The line of thought is the following: we usually do not perceive music as representing the human voice, the will or music itself. So, if there are such representations, they must be unperceived. However, the pleasure we take in recognizing what is represented in representational art, such as painting, for instance, depends on our consciously perceiving the representations. Therefore, it is very unlikely that the pleasure we take in listening to music has to be explained in terms of representation.

What Kivy attempts is to construe music as an object of the mind (the grain of truth in the view that music is a representation) while denying that it has any

essential representational property (something which the stimulation model is right about). His claim is that

when someone is enjoying music, he or she is, in any given instance, enjoying some sonic quality of a piece of music perceived under a certain description as doing something the listener enjoys, as doing something beautifully. (p. 78)

The two important elements of this account of musical experience are, firstly, that the experience is cognitive in that we perceive the sounds under a description, such as the description “fugue” (p. 73) or “the middle-C of a violin” (p. 87), for instance, and secondly, that what is so perceived “is doing something beautifully” (p. 78) or enjoyable, that is, as I understand it, that the object of perception under the given description is beautiful or enjoyable. Thus, I might take pleasure in perceiving something as the beautiful or enjoyable entering of a theme in a fugue, to revert to Kivy’s own example.

But what is it to perceive under a description? It has to be admitted that the text is less than clear on this point. Kivy tells us that “[...] even if a musical sound were completely simple in experience [...], it is always the object of musical perception as a sound of a certain quality, perceived and cognized under some description” (p. 87). Furthermore, we are told that perceiving under a description involves knowing certain things, such as knowing what the theme is and perceiving that the theme has appeared, for instance. However, the relation between such perceptions and pieces of knowledge is not entirely clear. In any case, it seems that the type of perception-as under consideration is different from the case in which we perceive a duck as a rabbit, for instance. I might perceive a duck as a rabbit even though I in no way perceive that the duck is a rabbit, whatever that would amount to. Indeed, in such cases, perception of x as y depends on the fact that x is not a y so that it would be impossible to perceive that x is a y . Yet when I correctly perceive a piece of music as a fugue, there is no doubt that it is a fugue. Thus, the type of perception-as which is at stake seems to be close to a recognition of x as being a y . Be that as it may, one would have wished a more careful account of what it is to perceive something under a description.

A second point worth mentioning is that Kivy does not offer any explanation of evaluative properties. Indeed, it seems that he explicitly refuses to do so: “And if someone should ask me to define musical beauty, I would, of course, decline any invitation, as any sensible person ought” (p. 77). If this means that there is little hope that one will find a reductive account of beauty, I find this congenial. Nevertheless, given the absence of any non-reductive account of evaluative properties, it is legitimate to suspect that something more radical and more controversial is meant. In any case, the centrality of the notion of beauty in the account of musical experience calls for an explanation of this concept.

How does Kivy’s story fit with the fact that musicologically ignorant people are quite able to have genuine musical experiences? Kivy’s answer is that many descriptions can be appropriate and appropriateness comes in degrees: we can have both musicological descriptions as well as more “phenomenal”, less techni-

cal and less appropriate descriptions, such as, for instance, the description involved in “I love that place where that other theme, not the one in the beginning, comes back again, sort of different, comfortably—like coming home to tea” (p. 79).

The question here is whether or not this conception of musical experience makes musical experience too intellectual. Kivy discusses a number of objections based on this worry and offers convincing replies to many of them. However, some doubts remain. Of course, it could be the case that we have a mind full of descriptions when we listen to a piece of music. And undoubtedly some of us do. But even if we always can, if asked, verbally point more or less adequately to what is the object of our experience, thereby conceptualizing it, it is doubtful that when in the grip of the *Agnus Dei* of Bach’s Mass in B minor, for instance, we necessarily have descriptions in our mind. It seems that there is something at once more primitive and more spiritual about experiences of this kind. This will seem too obscure a suggestion to many. To see what could be meant by it, I think that we have to go back to what Kivy calls “the vexed question of the emotions in music” (p. 145).

Kivy distinguishes, correctly in my view, between the arousal and the expression of emotions by music. Independently of whether or not a piece of music expresses any emotions, it can arouse emotions much as a dog can arouse fear. But what are emotions? After having noted that theories of emotions—in particular scientific theories of emotions—come and go, so that one should be careful about the use of such theories, Kivy settles for an account of emotions as involving an object plus “some belief or set of beliefs about that something which makes it plausible for me to be described as having that emotion I am experiencing” (p. 159). The examples he gives make it clear that the beliefs he has in mind are at least partly evaluative. Thus, my enjoyment of Josquin’s “Ave Maria” involves the belief that what I am hearing is beautiful.

This is a possible account of emotions, but it is surely not the only one. Nor is it the best, I think. What could be called cognitivist theories of emotions have recently come under growing pressure. Some emotions, such as unreasoned love or hate, for instance, do not seem to involve the corresponding evaluative beliefs. Indeed, in some cases, it appears that we have an emotion while believing the negation of the corresponding evaluative belief. For instance, I might have a perhaps irrational fear of a certain dog while being convinced—rightly or wrongly—that it is not dangerous at all.

In any case, Kivy’s account of emotion is incomplete: the presence of some evaluative belief or set of evaluative beliefs is not sufficient for the occurrence of emotions. I might well believe that something is beautiful without having any related emotion. But again, what are emotions? Here is a suggestion that I think is worth pursuing: my enjoyment of the “Ave Maria” simply consists in the apprehension, to use a formulation due to de Sousa, of the evaluative property of the piece. It appears a virtue of this suggestion that depending on how we grasp the object of the emotion, i.e. the piece of music, we can either have an emotion

based on some description of the object or one based on a simple, non-conceptual representation of it. However, this is not the place to explore such a suggestion.

Let me end by pointing out certain aspects of Kivy's book which should be of interest to many. There is a good discussion of music theory and, in particular, of Rudolph Reti's suggestion concerning the unity of pieces of music. The book ends with an interesting discussion of the profundity of music. The claim which is discussed is that musical works are profound in virtue of their craftsmanship which consists in the exploration of musical possibilities. Despite being at last rejected, this suggestion commands attention. Finally, it has to be mentioned that the first chapter offers an invigorating discussion of "visual music". Interestingly, Kivy argues that our interest in pure music is due to the fact that the aural sense has "both a survival profile low enough to defeat interpretational perceiving for substantial periods of time and an acuity, a complexity, a delicacy of the sense organ enabling it to take in objects of a sufficiently complex and interesting magnitude [...]" (p. 5).

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The Fixation of Belief and Its Undoing: Changing Beliefs Through Inquiry, by Isaac Levi. Cambridge: University Press, 1991. Pp. x + 192. £25.00.

There is always the question: what to do next? Most would now agree that some form of decision theory is a valuable tool for throwing light on that question. Though plainly an instance of the general question, a decision-theoretic treatment of "what to believe next" is sometimes greeted with a surprising measure of suspicion. It seems to undermine deeply engrained views about the differences between, broadly, moral and factual beliefs. That the differences do not run as deep as sometimes supposed, is part of the pragmatist heritage associated with philosophers like Peirce, James and Dewey.

Inquiry proceeds from a background of firmly held beliefs. All of these beliefs may be open to question at some time or other; but they cannot all be questioned at once. This, very briefly, is the kernel of the belief-doubt model of inquiry which Peirce put forward in "The Fixation of Belief" (1877). It is also the core of Isaac Levi's "infallibilism". According to Levi, an inquirer's corpus of full beliefs serves as her standard of serious possibility: if X fully believes that A (at some time t), then the truth of $\neg A$ is not a live option—not a serious possibility—for X (at t). Levi's infallibilism has an at first startling consequence. For, at any given time it appears to be irrational to replace one's current corpus of beliefs by some other corpus inconsistent with it: one would trade in certain truths for certain