

Anthropoesthetics of Expression. Art and Knowledge in Friedrich Schleiermacher

di Gregorio Tenti*

ABSTRACT

At the core of Friedrich Schleiermacher's theory of individuality lies the concept of expression. From his early writings to his last lessons, Schleiermacher described an ever-manifesting individual, revolving around a dynamic connection to the foundational whole of universal forces. In his view, to produce individual knowledge means to align with such forces in a concretely singular way: it is the case of artistic knowledge, regarded as a process of manifestation of an interiorly resonating becoming. This paper aims at analysing the role of expressive knowledge in Schleiermacher's philosophy, with special regard to his aesthetics and to the concept of *Trieb* (impulse). The particular presence of an anthropological tone in his view will finally be indicated as an 'anthropoesthetic' feature that characterizes the Moravian philosopher's thought.

KEYWORDS

Expression, Anthropoesthetics, Artistic Behaviour, Theory of Individuality, *Trieb*

A fundamental and certainly original trait of Friedrich Schleiermacher's thought concerns the kind of knowledge that establishes relations of singularity between concrete individuals, without passing through the abstract universal. The theme of the *individual knowledge of individuality* crosses the whole of Schleiermacher's work, from the *Reden Über die Religion* to his last contribution on aesthetics. Although this theme has unanimously been acknowledged by critics,¹ it has rarely been addressed in all its depth. The issue revolves around the knowledge that goes "from particular to particular",² which today can become emancipated from the

* Università degli Studi di Genova (IT), grgr.tenti@gmail.com

¹ See R. Odebrecht, *Schleiermachers System der Ästhetik. Grundlegung und Problemgeschichtliche Sendung*, Junker und Dünhaupt, Berlin 1932, pp. 40-91; T. Lehnerer, *Die Kunsttheorie Friedrich Schleiermachers*, Klett-Cotta, Stuttgart 1987, pp. 153-87; R. Diana, *Espressione e conoscenza individuale nell'estetica di Schleiermacher*, in "Archivio di storia della cultura", 10, 1997, pp. 377-400; P. D'Angelo, *Attraverso la storia dell'estetica, vol. II: da Kant a Hegel*, Quodlibet, Macerata 2019, pp. 325-27, 353-58.

² "Einzelnes durch einzelnes", says Schleiermacher (KGA I/11, p. 779). The same expression is used also by Dilthey (W. Dilthey, *Leben Schleiermachers* (1870), vol. I, ed. M.

link with the Romantic *en kai pan* (exemplarily underlined by Dilthey) and be regarded for example as a ‘transductive’ character of thought. ‘Transduction’ here means neither inductive nor deductive, but analogic knowledge, i.e., based on the “asymmetric qualification” of the correlation, on the problematic field established between concrete determinations.³ In order to know an individual or an artwork, for example, one has correlate to them without concept, by virtue of a meaningful dissymmetry and a common process.

One may begin by noticing how this kind of knowledge is hinted at in certain definitions of the concept of *expression*, where it refers to a “morphologic solidarity between extraneous phenomena”,⁴ a relation of productive implication between different series.⁵ Schleiermacher is in fact one of the most important interpreters of the concept of expression, intended as a form of differential communication, of elicitation by spiritual contact. Art and religion in particular are defined by Schleiermacher as the most proper forms of expressive knowledge, whose content represents a singularity that evokes an irreducibly singular way of its own communication. A semiotic paradox comes into play: the knowledge of individuality must itself assume an individual form. To ‘have knowledge’ of an individual, here, is to participate in a movement of expressive entanglement that involves creation: a singularity *expresses* itself and can only be expressed. This problem animates some of the most significant and topical efforts of Schleiermacher’s thought. This paper attempts to analyse them according to two complementary aspects, one of ontological-metaphysical (section I) and the other of aesthetical-anthropological nature (sections II and III).

1. *The Expressionist Solution*

The concept of expression has roots in all Schleiermacher’s philosophy and characterizes his reflection on aesthetics, to the extent that Wellek wrote, “Schleiermacher was apparently the first to attempt, with any speculative power, an aesthetic of feeling,

Redeker, in Id., *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. XIII, Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, Göttingen 1991, p. 192).

³ G. Simondon, *L’individuation à la lumière des notions de forme et d’information*, Jérôme Millon, Paris 2005, p. 201.

⁴ F. Leoni, *Habeas Corpus. Sei genealogie del corpo occidentale*, Bruno Mondadori, Milano 2019, p. 57; see also F. Bailly, G. Longo, *Mathematics and the Natural Sciences. The Physical Singularity of Life*, Imperial College Press, London 2011, p. 54.

⁵ G. Deleuze, *Différence et répétition* (1969); Eng. trans. *Difference and Repetition*, Columbia University Press, New York 1995, pp. 260-1.

of the creative act, of expression".⁶ Schleiermacher's aesthetics has misled generations of commentators up until recent times because of its peculiarity that lacks almost any tradition.⁷ As a theory of expression, it seems possible to recognize its Romantic and Goethean roots; however, it remains difficult to establish if Schleiermacher owes the *Frühromantik* more than the *Frühromantik* owes him.⁸ It is likely that Schleiermacher had elaborated an expressionist conception through the constant study of Spinoza before coming into contact with the early Romantic circle. Spinoza can be considered, after all, the forefather of philosophical expressionism in a modern sense, the one who brought together the Neoplatonic and Scotist motives that will come to Nietzsche, Heidegger and Whitehead.⁹

The idea of expression is to be considered in the first place as one of the fundamental gestures of Western philosophy, the expedient that allows philosophy to conceive the immanence of ontological activity and passivity. In the pages of the Spinozian *Ethics*, the expressed, taken in its process, is essence and not accident of what expresses itself: thus, an expressing God is no longer the remote cause of the world. Resembling the notion of *explicatio* (the unfolding of the divine essence), the concept of expression constitutes a refinement of the representative perspective,¹⁰ which is based on the transitivity and reversibility of content and form. In dealing with the problem of the relation between God and the world, Schleiermacher will explicitly use the metaphysical idea of expression in this sense, to correct the representative (i.e., creationist) perspective.¹¹ While a representative paradigm implies the idea of creation as a subjective creator's action, in which the form of what is created remains contingent, an expressive paradigm instead involves the idea of creation as the development of a reality that, although belonging to a different order, is essentially inherent to what is created and consists in it. Here, form and content are equally necessary, and the form is not transitive or reversible because it requires a real genesis.

⁶ R. Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism. 1750-1950*, vol. 2, Yale University Press, New Haven and London 1955, p. 308.

⁷ See D'Angelo, cit., pp. 301-22.

⁸ See A. Voskanian, 'Warum Schleiermacher kein Romantiker ist', in U. Barth, C.-D. Osthövener (eds.), *200 Jahre „Reden Über die Religion“. Akten des 1. Internationalen Kongresses der Schleiermacher-Gesellschaft. Halle 14.-17. März 1999*, de Gruyter, Berlin-New York 2000, pp. 574-82; D'Angelo, cit., pp. 359-81.

⁹ See for example G. Deleuze, *Spinoza et le problème de l'expression* (1968); Eng. trans. *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, Zone Books, New York 1990.

¹⁰ See G. Colli, *Filosofia dell'espressione* (1969), Adelphi, Milano 2016, pp. 19ff., 57ff.

¹¹ D II, pp. 299-314; KGA I/7, 1, pp. 140-50.

In Schleiermacher's thought, the idea of expression is not of aesthetic origin; it rather builds a bridge between aesthetics and the other areas of his philosophy. In the *Reden Über die Religion* and the *Monologen*, for instance, one can find an already formulated metaphysics of the expressive relation between individual and universe, finite and infinite, at whose center is the active-passive event of individuating elaboration. However, some earlier writings clearly reveal how this conception dates back to the Spinozian studies and to the theory of *conatus* in particular. Especially in the exposition of *Spinozismus* (1793/94), the individual intended as singularity (*Einzelheit*) is connected to the dynamic fundament of the universe through his *Trieb*, a living impulse of manifestation placed before the distinction between subject and object. The impulse is "expression of the fundamental force which resides in the original matter of the thing", and takes form in proto-aesthetic manifestations (such as gestures) or proto-moral ones (such as tendencies and dispositions).¹² On this very idea is based the 'great living law' of individuality that forms the speculative ground of the *Reden* and the *Monologen*, where the human soul is described for the first time as a product of two impulses, one of spiritual expansion and one of spiritual contraction.¹³

The notion of *Trieb* was in fact very much in vogue in the Halle tradition, where Schleiermacher was trained in philosophy between 1792 and 1794.¹⁴ His vision of an ever-forming universe through the individual formula will change, from the early years of 1800, into a philosophical framework in which every human act is a becoming-organ of the fundament¹⁵ and "every act is expression" of the world's reason. From Schleiermacher's ethical viewpoint, "life itself is called art".¹⁶ The expression of the fundament – a concept that becomes progressively more complex in Schleiermacher's philosophy –¹⁷ designates an intimate link of man with himself, an "immediate self-consciousness", which however is also a live presence of the universe in the individual, in correspondence with

¹² KGA I/1, p. 537; see D. Thouard *L'éthique de l'individualité chez Schleiermacher*, in "Archives de Philosophie", 77, 2, 2014, pp. 281-99.

¹³ KGA I/2, p. 191.

¹⁴ See G. D'Aniello *Una ontologia dialettica. Fondamento e autocoscienza in Schleiermacher*, Pagina, Bari 2007, chap. I.

¹⁵ SW II, p. 120.

¹⁶ SW II, p. 313.

¹⁷ In general, the notion of fundament designates the live presence of the absolute in men. Schleiermacher operates an epochal shift toward an experiential and anthropological understanding of the first principle, as an unobjectifiable nature that can only be found expressed in the actual harmony of man's faculties (see A. Arndt, 'Die Metaphysik der Dialektik', in C. Helmer, C. Kranich und B. Rehme-Iffert (eds.), *Schleiermachers Dialektik. Die Liebe zum Wissen in Philosophie und Theologie*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 2003, pp. 135-39; D'Aniello, cit., chap. II).

the active-passive principle of feeling. Here the *Selbstbewusstsein*, before being thematized by an act of consciousness, is *Selbstmanifestation*, manifestation of the self. As noted by Hermann Timm,¹⁸ the principle of *Sichäußern* is pivotal to all Schleiermacher's mature reflection on religion.

So much for the pervasiveness of the expressionist solution in Schleiermacher's thought. There is, besides, a specific order of human doing that *reveals and thematizes* this fundamental dynamic. It is the sphere of "individual symbolizing activities", distinct from the "identical" ones, in which the form of the act is codifiable and the content is transferable as it is. Scientific knowledge represents, for instance, a symbolizing activity, that makes use of a codified and transparent medium to vehiculate an identical content. In scientific knowledge, form and content can be separated in function of abstract universality. Individual knowledge is based on a different semiotic relation: the content 'emanates' from the particular form,¹⁹ the expressed comes before the *exprimendum* (the 'how' before the 'what'). It is not that an abstract knowledge is applied on an object by a knowing subject: rather, one must say that a dynamic determination (the feeling) finds consistency and recognizes itself in its own symbolic manifestation, mediates itself productively, thus constituting the real and effective life of the object.

That is how feeling – the active and immediate presence of the fundament – is realized in the artwork and the exercise of faith. Art and religion are the two fundamental modes of knowing what is most individual and most universal at once, the divine in the singularity. The artistic act, as well as the act of faith, is never a pure act of volition or fabrication by a sovereign subject, but rather an act that arises by elicitation, by evenemential encounter; that produces further elicitation through the life of the work; that evokes, then, an organic and concomitant reformulation and requires a prolongation to be comprehended, not bearing to be reduced to a simple *datum*. Expression goes from individuality to individuality, from that sort of concrete universal that is the singular self-consciousness to another, as a passage of life. In light of all this, for Schleiermacher, religion represents the necessary conclusion of art, because art must comprehend itself according to its own expressive and vital task. If art were to lose the thread of *Selbstmanifestation*, it would be reduced to mere artifice and reverie.

¹⁸ H. Timm, *Die heilige Revolution. Schleiermacher – Novalis – Friedrich Schlegel*, Syndikat, Frankfurt a.M. 1978, p. 43.

¹⁹ SW II, p. 181.

2. Art as Expression

There is a general plane of expression, linked to a metaphysics of individuality, and a specific plane of expression that resumes it, the plane of art. “Expression, then”, writes Scholtz,²⁰ “in Schleiermacher has a meaning which is objective and subjective at once. The concept includes the meaning of the Aristotelian concept of mimesis, insofar as the ‘artistic activity’ brings to completion what was already announced in nature”. In Schleiermacher’s works on ethics, but also and above all in his writings on aesthetics, art represents a model of knowledge that does not ‘regard’ its object, but creates it. Such knowledge relies on an act of recognition of the self in the world, but this recognition takes place through the inner creation of an archetypal symbol (*Urbild*): the real is interiorly produced in the ideal. Not to lose the transcendental meaning of archetype, Schleiermacher refers to it as something that is ‘found’; the peculiarity of the archetype is indeed the possibility of being expressed, which means being *further* – though not originally – produced. But the symbol is not comparable to an object that can be found; rather to a sense that is received and allowed to develop. The original image, here, is not a scheme open to its employs, but a dynamic formation that requires an expressive and therefore a truly genetic act.²¹ It establishes an immanent rule of the process, because it stems from the process itself as a singular novelty.

Here, then, is the core of Schleiermacher’s aesthetics. What distinguishes artistic activity from the others and from what is *kunstlos*, non-artistic, is exactly this differential moment, this sort of deferment that separates the affect from mundane phenomenality, cultivates it and sublimates into a symbol.²² Schleiermacher describes this central moment, this sort of second creation, as part of an overall process of manifestation that arises from feeling and concludes in an “execution” (be it with or without work). The constructiveness of phantasy arises legitimately only from an inner tendency toward expression: man stands as an articulation of the universe because he can bind reality to the active source of ideality in himself.²³ The catalysation of feeling is described as the

²⁰ G. Scholtz, *Die Philosophie Schleiermachers*, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt 1984, p. 142.

²¹ Hence the other principle, that of universality of the genius: since art is first of all a form of creation, then “every artist is a genius”; but since art is, even before that, manifestation of the fundament that is actively present in the individual self, one must add that “every man is an artist”, at least to some extent (SW II, p. 184).

²² *ÄL*, p. 10-11.

²³ In Schleiermacher’s Speeches at the Berlin Academy of Sciences devoted to aesthetics, this phase of the creative process is made the subject of a terminological rewording:

human faculty of retaining affects, of making them grow within a tensive field or plane of resonance (*Stimmung*), which determines a condition of enthusiasm (*Begeisterung*). It is just then that a formative process can take place.

Expression is a figure of *mimesis* only as it places the archetype inside, not outside the individual (ÄL 4); as it ties to the idea of *Nachbildung*, the dynamic cohesion of the universe and the individual in the recreating act (and not to the *Nachahmung*, the exterior imitation). If nature stands as a force and not as a complex of figures, then *mimesis* is not a static mirroring but rather a modulation of the force itself. The “archetypal force” of artistic act²⁴ articulates vectors that come from the trunk of individual *conatus*, regarded as an essential tendency of the fundament to manifestation. For this reason, too, one should not take a subtractive approach toward the artistic process, according to which the material completion of the creative moment, that is the physically constructive moment, would be redundant after all:²⁵ if the artistic process is the process of expression of a force, every passage is a realizing increase,²⁶ and the material production of the world is a fulfilment of the ideal creative act; so that – in an expressionist view – to deny the necessity of it would mean to deny the effective reality of the previous moment. By affirming the logical and ontological priority of the immaterial moment does nothing but reintroduce a representative perspective, a ‘poor’ Platonism, in which the idea is simply truer than the thing, without acknowledging the reverse semiotic relation that pertains to expressive determinations. It is for this same reason that in Schleiermacher’s conception, religion is not ‘truer’ than art because it is purer, less compromised with matter: on the contrary, religion needs art just as art needs religion. Since rooted in an expressive impulse that ultimately traces back to the fundament of all things, the ideal-real materiality of artistic doing is contingent and necessary at once.

More than a spiritual fundament, here too it is necessary to conceive a dynamic, non-finalistic principle of activity: a *Trieb*, then, formulated as a *Kunsttrieb*, an artistic impulse. At the beginning of the lessons on aesthetics of 1818/19 (as already in *Brouillon* of 1805/06), the notion of *Kunsttrieb* seems to play with the ambiv-

the *Urbild* becomes a “*Gestalt*” and the moment of *Urbildung* a “*Vorbildung*”, a “pre-figuration”. This reformulation contributes to further de-sublimate the notion of genius and deprives – at least in part – fantasy of its archetypal power, perhaps perceived as a Romantic residue.

²⁴ ÄL, p. 42.

²⁵ B. Croce, *L'estetica di Federico Schleiermacher*, in “*La Critica*”, 33, 1935, p. 119.

²⁶ ÄL, p. 33.

alence of the term *Kunst*, still intended as *ars*, the dimension of ethical competence. In this sense, art is present in every man's life, and the impulse is a generic *Trieb der Äußerung*,²⁷ a universal tendency toward manifestation as elaboration of the world. However, the same *Trieb* also animates the *specifically* artistic expression: it is also an *Impuls zur Kunst*²⁸ realized in the different arts, determined by places, epochs, and personal predispositions. A character of indeterminateness, thus, pertains essentially to the concept of impulse. It represents a movement of gradual realization that results in different determinations according to its grade, without any change in nature. The *Kunsttrieb* is a universal impulse to manifestation when considered closer to its root, an impulse to symbolic production when considered in its more precise expressions.

Though without properly clarifying it (and thus paving the way to more than one uncertainty), Schleiermacher will remain perfectly consistent with this insight, which will allow him to conceive the universality of the aesthetic principle beside the autonomous legitimacy of artistic phenomena. Insofar as it is grafted in the *Trieb*, the process of *Urbildung* itself is placed before the binomial spontaneity/organization; and it is no coincidence that, whereas young Schleiermacher translated with *Trieb* the Spinozian *conatus*, mature Schleiermacher will translate with the same term the *eidos* of the Platonic *Phaedrus*.²⁹ The action of inventive intelligence is not exterior to the movement of the impulse, which 'finds its form' like an organic development. A seed of formative organization, as a primitive "need for rhythm and harmony",³⁰ is always present in the impulse as its aspiration to universality. The reflexive moment does not interrupt the expressive process; it is a step towards its completion.

3. *Aesthetics and the Tangle of the Living*

In order to understand the implications of an aesthetic of expression such as Schleiermacher's, let us take a closer look at the notion of *Trieb*, so widespread and important at the time.³¹ At the beginning of the 18th century, the idea of impulse seemed to inter-

²⁷ KGA I/11, p. 741.

²⁸ KGA I/11, p. 780.

²⁹ See C. Berner, *Le langage de la philosophie. Dialogue et communicabilité chez Friedrich Schlegel et Friedrich Schleiermacher*, in "Revue philosophique de Lovain", 112, 2, 2014, p. 278.

³⁰ KGA I/11, p. 781.

³¹ See F.J. Wetz 'Trieb', in J. Ritter et al. (eds.), *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, Bd. 10, Schwabe & co. AG., Basel 1998, pp. 1483-88.

cept a conceptual need of the epoch, anticipated by the Spinozian doctrine of *conatus*, the Leibnizian doctrine of *appetitus* and the medical theories on the immanent purposiveness of organic life. The University of Halle is at the very centre of this speculative development. The vitalist approach of Georg Ernst Stahl, professor of Medicine in Halle until 1714, played a fundamental role in that tradition and in the development of Pietism as a whole,³² introducing a scientifically legitimate reasoning by forces (rather than by simple mechanical causes). Stahl's doctrines directly influenced Christian Thomasius' *Affektenlehre*, in which the *Trieb* holds special importance;³³ but the notion of impulse will actually establish itself in the Halle tradition thanks to a fierce opposer of Stahl, Christian Wolff, who will transmit it to Baumgarten and Crusius.³⁴ The concept will then survive the dispute between Pietism and Wolffian rationalism to assume different meanings in Schiller, Herder, Reinhold, and Fichte. This is the conceptual atmosphere breathed by Schleiermacher in his early years in Halle. For the young Moravian philosopher, the notion of *Trieb* addresses the need of a unified idea of man as a psychophysical unity in activity, linking the domains of morality and reason to those of affectivity and motivations.

Among the many possible impulses – paradigmatically described by Crusius in his *Anweisung, vernünftig zu leben* (1744) – one of the most mentioned was the artistic impulse, the *Kunsttrieb*.³⁵ Hermann Samuel Reimarus, who described the *Trieb* in general as an irreflexive instinct, designated the *Kunsttrieb* as a skilful drive toward regulated modification of the environment that belongs to all animals – from which the human doing is distinguished, however, by the presence of reflection.³⁶ If nature has a *Kunstinstinkt* of its own, as Novalis puts it,³⁷ the human production is part of and

³² See J. Geyer-Kordesch, 'Georg Ernst Stahl's Radical Pietist Medicine and its Influence on the German Enlightenment', in A. Cunningham and R. French (eds.), *The Medical Enlightenment of the Eighteenth Century*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge (MA) 1990, pp. 67-87; J. Zammuto, *The Gestation of German Biology. Philosophy and Physiology from Stahl to Schelling*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 2018, chap. 1.

³³ See J. Geyer-Kordesch, 'Die Medizin im Spannungsfeld zwischen Aufklärung und Pietismus: Das unbehagliche Werk Georg Ernst Stahls und dessen kulturelle Bedeutung', in N. Hinske (ed.), *Zentren der Aufklärung. Halle. I. Aufklärung und Pietismus*, Niemeyer, Heidelberg 1989, pp. 255-74.

³⁴ See S. Buchenau, *Trieb, Antrieb, Triebfeder dans la philosophie morale prékantienne*, in "Revue Germanique Internationale", 18, 2002, pp. 11-24.

³⁵ See H. Kelm, 'Zur Konzeption des „Kunsttriebs“ bei Schleiermacher und Steffens im Hinblick auf eine systematische Verbindung von Ästhetik und Naturphilosophie', in S. Schimdt, L. Miodonski (eds.), *System und Subversion. Friedrich Schleiermachers und Henrik Steffens*, de Gruyter, Berlin-Boston 2018, pp. 161-65.

³⁶ See Zammuto, cit., pp. 138-44.

³⁷ Novalis, *Schriften*, Bd. III, ed. R. Samuel, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darm-

simultaneously differentiates itself from the natural becoming. This character of difference-in-the-continuity is clearly present in Herder's conception of *Trieb*,³⁸ where the human faculty of reflection is described as *Besonnenheit*, "the single positive force of thought [...] bound up with a certain organization of the body".³⁹ Friedrich Schiller, as well, will famously express a doctrine of aesthetic impulse in *Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen* (1794). Significant theories of aesthetic force and *Trieb*, however, had already been formulated by authors such as Karl Philipp Moritz, for example in *Über die bildende Nachahmung des Schönen* (1788), or Georg Forster in *Die Kunst und das Zeitalter* (1789).

We want to suggest that the concept of *Trieb* represents an important *anthropological* feature of the 18th century aesthetics, first dominant in the Halle tradition⁴⁰ and then, before the end of the century, spread in all German philosophy.⁴¹ Intended as a *Physik der Seele*, before the Kantian separation from morality, philosophical anthropology confronted itself with the tangle of the spiritual and the corporeal, addressing the issue of how the living develops in a moral and ideal being.⁴² In this frame, corporeity and affectivity are animated by a drive toward constructive manifestation which, in presence of cognitive faculties, leads to an idealized elaboration of the world, which represents man's specific destination. Aesthetics is one of the many sciences in charge of the description of the whole man, and also a central one, because it addresses the connection itself between nature and reason as given in human experience and activity. Though assuming the autonomization of aesthetics as theory of art, Schleiermacher refers in great measure to these debates. This filiation is particularly clear in his own use of the concepts of *Trieb* and *Kunsttrieb*.

The *Trieb* is an element of a certain importance in Schleiermacher's philosophy as a whole. Only in his anthropology, however, it assumes a clear role in the description of the human as an individualized spiritual nature. What comes the closest to an an-

stadt 1983, p. 650.

³⁸ See P. Péniçon, *Trieb et énergie chez Herder*, in "Revue Germanique Internationale", 18, 2002, pp. 45-52.

³⁹ J.G. Herder, *Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache* (1772); Eng. trans. *Treatise on the Origin of Language*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge (MA) 2002, p. 84.

⁴⁰ See E. Stöckmann *Anthropologische Ästhetik. Philosophie, Psychologie und ästhetische Theorie der Emotionen in der Diskurs der Aufklärung*, Niemeyer, Tübingen 2009.

⁴¹ Suffice it to think of the famous notion of *Bildungstrieb*, for which see S. Fabbri Bertolotti, *Impulso formazione organismo. Per una storia del concetto di Bildungstrieb nella cultura tedesca*, Olschki, Firenze 1990.

⁴² See M. Linden, *Untersuchungen zum Anthropologiebegriff des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Lang, Frankfurt a.M.-Bern 1976.

thropologic exposition in Schleiermacher's works are most certainly his lessons in psychology, envisioned and held in the exact same years as those in aesthetics.⁴³ Psychology, in Schleiermacher's view, corresponds directly to anthropology, for it concerns man as a corporeal and spiritual whole in activity.⁴⁴ The human is thus divided in a sphere of receptivity, corresponding to the "sense" (*Sinn*), and a sphere of activity, corresponding to the *Trieb*. As distinguished from and correlated to *Sinn*, the *Trieb* represents the dimension of human activity in general, the "being of the soul in the things":⁴⁵ it designates a non-finalistic nor stereotyped endogenous force that constructively effectuates itself in exteriority (thus referring much more to the concept of will than to that of instinct).

Among the modes of human impulse described in the psychology lessons, one of the most important is that of artistic manifestation, the *Kunsttrieb*, which can be referred to as the 'artistic tendency' of man. However skilled, a manifestation can be called artistic only when it passes from irreflexive exteriorization to reflexive expression, that is, when it emancipates itself from stereotypy and object-dependence in the specific ways of art. This movement is fulfilled in a moment of concrete universality, in which man creatively elevates his expression to the other's comprehension by moulding the ideal.⁴⁶ The essence of art lies precisely in this threshold; but the *Trieb* grants it continuity with manifestation in general. Insofar as the feeling cannot be simply the content of the impulse, we must say that between feeling and impulse there is an expressive equivalence. In fact, the *Gefühl* corresponds to the fundamental coalescence of *Sinn* and *Trieb*, receptivity and activity.

In the lessons on aesthetics the key concept of *Kunsttrieb* un-

⁴³ See A. Arndt, 'Schleiermachers Psychologie – eine Philosophie des subjektiven Geistes?', in A. von Scheliha, J. Dierken (eds.), *Der Mensch und seine Seele. Bildung – Frömmigkeit – Ästhetik. Akten des internationalen Kongresses der Schleiermacher-Gesellschaft in Münster, September 2015*, de Gruyter, Berlin-Boston 2017, p. 247.

⁴⁴ See H. Herms, 'Leibhafter Geist – Beseelte Organisation. Schleiermachers Psychologie als Anthropologie. Ihre Stellung in seinem theologisch-philosophischen System und ihre Gegenwartsbedeutung', in A. von Scheliha, J. Dierken (eds.), *Der Mensch und seine Seele. Bildung – Frömmigkeit – Ästhetik. Akten des internationalen Kongresses der Schleiermacher-Gesellschaft in Münster, September 2015*, de Gruyter, Berlin-Boston 2017, pp. 217-244. More precisely, psychology can be defined as the idealization of the natural activities of the living, and anthropology as the ethology of the idealizing living being, in which "the physiologic and the pragmatic is one and the same, only in different directions" (KGA I/2, p. 366). Friedrich Schlegel too, in conflict with Kant's *Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht*, conceived a "science of humanity" as a "fusion of psychology and physiology" which includes also aesthetics (F. Schlegel *Kritische-Friedrich-Schlegel-Ausgabe*, vol. XVI, ed. by H. Eichner, Ferdinand Schöningh, Paderborn/München/Wien 1981, p. 14).

⁴⁵ KGA II/13, p. 34.

⁴⁶ KGA II/13, p. 1011.

derlies the same basic principle: the differential relation between what is *kunstlos* (non-artistic, natural) and what is instead *Kunst*.⁴⁷ At the centre of the aesthetic reflection, then, is the connection between an energetic basin represented by the lifeworld and art as a dimension of measure and ideality. In the process of creation, this relation is articulated as the production of a resonance of lived experiences (*Stimmung*), from which stems enthusiasm (*Begeisterung*), that becomes a full-fledged inspiration in light of a reflexive mediation of archetypal nature (*Urbildung*). What Schleiermacher describes as the paradigmatic development of *Kunstthätigkeit* is a movement rooted in a “too elevated” tangle, a “*Zuhoc*”⁴⁸ that resides in the innermost regions of the living, of which one can only say that it has the nature of an impulse, endowed with an “ethical” and a “cosmic meaning” at once.⁴⁹ The deepest significance of the concept of art, thus, has an anthropologic character, not only and not so much because it belongs to all men like a transcendental structure, but first and foremost because it crosses and assumes the pre-reflexive plane of affectivity and tendencies.

From an anthropological perspective, all Schleiermacher’s aesthetics become clearer. The movement from non-artistic to artistic manifestation, for example, explains the order of exposition of the single arts, which goes from the most ‘natural’ (especially mimic and music) to the most ideal ones (such as painting and poetry). But the same movement corresponds to the description of the artistic act, which starts with a pre-conscious conversion and canalization of a lived meaning and revolves around the ‘attractor’ of the *Urbildung*. To an anthropological intonation belongs Schleiermacher’s theory of physiological derivation of the arts as well. According to this theory, every art descends from the exercise of specific organs; the “organs”, however, are material-immaterial components described as both exterior and interior forms of activity (there is an exterior ear, for instance, as much an interior one), zones of transparency of a body intended as live and expressive matter.⁵⁰ This makes explicit how art takes place in the liminal zone of becoming between corporeity and spirituality, the mysterious tangle of receptivity and activity in which the individual being itself consists.

⁴⁷ See Lehnerer, cit., pp. 147-51.

⁴⁸ *ÄL*, p. 5.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *ÄL*, pp. 51-53.

4. Schleiermacher and Anthroaesthetics

If it is true that, in the process that “could be entitled ‘from Shaftesbury to the Romantics’”, the idea of expression becomes an “autonomous aesthetic fact” with the birth of phantasy as a free creative faculty,⁵¹ it is also true that it never disposes of its manifold connotations of physiological, psychological, and anthropological nature.⁵² In Schleiermacher, an expressionist aesthetics rests precisely on an *anthropological interest toward individuality*, as opposed to a *logical interest toward identity* that underlies, instead, what can be referred to as a representative aesthetics. There is a clear-cut distinction, for Schleiermacher, between representative communication, which conveys an identical meaning on the basis of an intersubjective relation of abstract transparency, and expressive communication, which implies the creative becoming of what expresses itself and founds a common process between the terms. It follows that while an aesthetics of representation is based on a ‘passive anthropology’, an aesthetics of expression presupposes an ‘active anthropology’ that understands man in formative relation with nature.⁵³

We can finally see to what extent an ‘anthroaesthetic’⁵⁴ meaning echoes in the statement “*in der Kunst [...] ist alles bloßer Ausdruck*”.⁵⁵ Although it is correct to say, as Edgar Wind did,⁵⁶ that Schleiermacher asserts a still rather pronounced articulation between ‘art’ and ‘life’, his will to properly conceive the passage between the two is also very evident; to the point that he comes to formulate a full-fledged theory of creative distillation of individual experiences, taken without concept in their affective significance, as a fundamental mode of human nature. Schleiermacher’s concept of impulse specifically indicates the abolition of a rigid distinction between reason and sensibility⁵⁷ and grounds a virtuous relationship between ideality and reality. In light of the living tangle that under-

⁵¹ L. Formigari, *Sulla genesi del concetto di espressione. Il Settecento inglese*, in “Revue Internationale de Philosophie”, 16, 59/1, 1962, pp. 101, 103.

⁵² See C. Cappelletto, E. Franzini, *Estetica dell’espressione*, Le Monnier, Firenze 2005; N. Meuter, *Anthropologie des Ausdrucks. Die Expressivität des Menschen zwischen Natur und Kultur*, Wilhelm Fink, München 2006.

⁵³ NS, pp. 6-7.

⁵⁴ For the coining of this term see K. Mandoki, *The Evolution of Aesthesis*, in “Rivista di Estetica”, 54, 2013, pp. 117-33, and Id., *The Indispensable Excess of Aesthetics: Evolution of Sensibility in Nature*, Rowman & Littlefield, London 2015.

⁵⁵ “In art, all is pure expression” (ÄL, p. 42).

⁵⁶ E. Wind, ‘Warburgs Begriff der Kulturwissenschaft und seine Bedeutung für die Ästhetik’ (1930), in D. Wuttke (ed.), *Aby Warburg. Ausgewählte Schriften und Würdigungen*, Koerner, Baden-Baden 1992, pp. 174 ff.

⁵⁷ ÄL, p. 52.

lies the *Einzelne*, the creative act of genius itself is thus subject of a paradigmatic de-sublimation.

We have tried to demonstrate the deep connection between Schleiermacher's epistemology of individuality, his aesthetics of expression, and his anthropology. The concept of *Trieb* may be interpreted as a bridge between all these aspects and as the concept of a dynamic continuity that grants the possibility of a non-conceptual and productive analogy between individuals in general. The essence of man itself, in Schleiermacher's philosophy, is epitomized by the constant drive toward communicative manifestation as a spiritual construction of the world, so that the idea of human being coincides with the possibility of his natural-spiritual activities. In this framework, the aesthetic investigation does not revolve around the chance of revealing an unconscious vitality beneath the symbolic guises of art: it is rather about following the seed of human doing, the "behavioural predisposition"⁵⁸ that finally leads to artistic forms.

In conclusion, it is noteworthy that by giving priority to the interior modulation of lived experiences Schleiermacher avoids the reduction of behaviour to the causal dependence on external stimuli (the experiential data), as well as he avoids a phenomenalist understanding of behaviour which limits the investigation to what happens 'publicly', 'in the open', outside man's interior elaboration.⁵⁹ To say that individual communication is not measurable (since it does not rely on identical measure) and not primarily public (since it connects individuals through their inwardness), but rather contingent, transformative, and interior, means to endow communication with a transductive or expressive character.⁶⁰ The knowledge of the other as an individual, in this view, does not concern what happens between the individuals but rather what happens 'through' them. An aesthetic that wants to acknowledge his anthropological implications⁶¹ needs to hold some kind of expressionist solution, if it does not want to slide into reductionism. From this viewpoint, too, going back to Schleiermacher's aesthetics would be worth the effort.

⁵⁸ E. Dissanayake, *Roots and Route of the Artification Hypothesis*, in "Avant", vol. VIII, 1, 2017, p. 26.

⁵⁹ See T. Tice, 'Schleiermacher's Psychology: An Early Modern Approach, a Challenge to Current Tendencies', in G. Meckenstock, J. Ringleben (eds.), *Schleiermacher und die wissenschaftliche Kultur des Christentums*, de Gruyter, Berlin-New York 1991, pp. 514ff.

⁶⁰ See A. Mróz, *Towards Behavioral Aesthetics*, in "The Polish Journal of Aesthetics", 52, 1, 2019, pp. 95-111.

⁶¹ See e.g. E. Dissanayake, *Art as Human Behavior: Toward an Ethological View of Art*, in "The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism", 38, 4, 1980, pp. 397-406; but also G.W. Bertram, *Kunst als menschliche Praxis. Eine Ästhetik* (2014); Eng. trans. *Art as Human Practice. An Aesthetics*, Bloomsbury, London-New York 2014.

References

- Arndt, A., 'Die Metaphysik der Dialektik', in C. Helmer, C. Kränich und B. Rehme-Iffert (eds.), *Schleiermachers Dialektik. Die Liebe zum Wissen in Philosophie und Theologie*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 2003, pp. 135-139.
- Arndt, A., 'Schleiermachers Psychologie – eine Philosophie des subjektiven Geistes?', in A. von Scheliha, J. Dierken (eds.), *Der Mensch und seine Seele. Bildung – Frömmigkeit – Ästhetik. Akten des internationalen Kongresses der Schleiermacher-Gesellschaft in Münster, September 2015*, de Gruyter, Berlin-Boston 2017, pp. 245-256.
- Bailly F., Longo G., *Mathematics and the Natural Sciences. The Physical Singularity of Life*, Imperial College Press, London 2011.
- Berner C., *Le langage de la philosophie. Dialogue et communicabilité chez Friedrich Schlegel et Friedrich Schleiermacher*, in "Revue philosophique de Lovain", 112, 2, 2014, pp. 269-288.
- Bertram G.W., *Kunst als menschliche Praxis. Eine Ästhetik* (2014); trans. *Art as Human Practice. An Aesthetics*, Bloomsbury, London-New York 2014.
- Buchenau S., *Trieb, Antrieb, Triebfeder dans la philosophie morale prékantienne*, in "Revue Germanique Internationale", 18, 2002, pp. 11-24.
- Cappelletto C., Franzini E., *Estetica dell'espressione*, Le Monnier, Firenze 2005.
- Colli G., *Filosofia dell'espressione* (1969), Adelphi, Milano 2016.
- Croce B., *L'estetica di Federico Schleiermacher*, in "La Critica", 33, 1935, pp. 114-127.
- D'Angelo P., *Attraverso la storia dell'estetica. Vol. II: da Kant a Hegel*, Quodlibet, Macerata 2019.
- D'Aniello G., *Una ontologia dialettica. Fondamento e autocoscienza in Schleiermacher*, Pagina, Bari 2007.
- Deleuze G., *Spinoza et le problème de l'expression* (1968); Eng. trans. *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, Zone Books, New York 1990.
- Deleuze G., *Différence et répétition* (1969); Eng. trans. *Difference and Repetition*, Columbia University Press, New York 1995.
- Diana R., *Espressione e conoscenza individuale nell'estetica di Schleiermacher*, in "Archivio di storia della cultura", 10, 1997, pp. 377-400.
- Dilthey W., *Leben Schleiermachers* (1870), vol. I, ed. by M. Redeker, in Id., *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. XIII, Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, Göttingen 1991.

- Dissanayake E., *Art as Human Behavior: Toward an Ethological View of Art*, in "The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism", 38, 4, 1980, pp. 397-406.
- Dissanayake E., *Roots and Route of the Artification Hypothesis*, in "Avant", vol. VIII, n. 1, 2017, pp. 15-32.
- Fabrizio Bertolotti S., *Impulso formazione organismo. Per una storia del concetto di Bildungstrieb nella cultura tedesca*, Olschki, Firenze 1990.
- Formigari L., *Sulla genesi del concetto di espressione. Il Settecento inglese*, in "Revue Internationale de Philosophie", 16, 59, 1962, pp. 101-115.
- Geyer-Kordesch J., 'Die Medizin im Spannungsfeld zwischen Aufklärung und Pietismus: Das unbequeme Werk Georg Ernst Stahls und dessen kulturelle Bedeutung', in N. Hinske (ed.), *Zentren der Aufklärung. Halle. I. Aufklärung und Pietismus*, Niemeyer, Heidelberg 1989, pp. 255-274.
- Geyer-Kordesch J., 'Georg Ernst Stahl's Radical Pietist Medicine and its Influence on the German Enlightenment', in A. Cunningham and R. French (eds.), *The Medical Enlightenment of the Eighteenth Century*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge (MA) 1990, pp. 67-87.
- Herder J.G., *Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache* (1772); Eng. trans. *Treatise on the Origin of Language*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge (MA) 2002.
- Hermes E., 'Leibhafter Geist – Beseelte Organisation. Schleiermachers Psychologie als Anthropologie. Ihre Stellung in seinem theologisch-philosophischen System und ihre Gegenwartsbedeutung', in A. von Scheliha, J. Dierken (eds.), *Der Mensch und seine Seele. Bildung – Frömmigkeit – Ästhetik. Akten des internationalen Kongresses der Schleiermacher-Gesellschaft in Münster, September 2015*, de Gruyter, Berlin-Boston 2017, pp. 217-244.
- Kelm H., 'Zur Konzeption des „Kunsttriebs“ bei Schleiermacher und Steffens im Hinblick auf eine systematische Verbindung von Ästhetik und Naturphilosophie', in S. Schimdt, L. Miodonski (eds.), *System und Subversion. Friedrich Schleiermachers und Henrik Steffens*, de Gruyter, Berlin-Boston 2018, pp. 155-174.
- Lehnerer T., *Die Kunsttheorie Friedrich Schleiermachers*, Klett-Cotta, Stuttgart 1987.
- Leoni F., *Habeas Corpus. Sei genealogie del corpo occidentale*, Bruno Mondadori, Milano 2019.
- Linden M., *Untersuchungen zum Anthropologiebegriff des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Lang, Frankfurt a.M.-Bern 1976.
- Mandoki K., *The Evolution of Aesthesis*, in "Rivista di Estetica", 54, 2013, pp. 117-133.

- Mandoki K., *The Indispensable Excess of Aesthetics: Evolution of Sensibility in Nature*, Rowman & Littlefield, London 2015.
- Meuter N., *Anthropologie des Ausdrucks. Die Expressivität des Menschen zwischen Natur und Kultur*, Wilhelm Fink, München 2006.
- Mróz A., *Towards Behavioral Aesthetics*, in "The Polish Journal of Aesthetics", 52, 1, 2019, pp. 95-111.
- Novalis, *Schriften*, vol. III, ed. by R. Samuel, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt 1983.
- Odebrecht R., *Schleiermachers System der Ästhetik. Grundlegung und Problemsgeschichtliche Sendung*, Junker und Dünnhaupt, Berlin 1932.
- Pénisson P., *Trieb et énergie chez Herder*, in "Revue Germanique Internationale", 18, 2002, pp. 45-52.
- Schlegel F., *Kritische-Friedrich-Schlegel-Ausgabe*, XVI, ed. by H. Eichner, Ferdinand Schöningh, Paderborn-München-Wien 1981.
- Schleiermacher F., *Werke. Auswahl in vier Bänden*, ed. by O. Braun und J. Bauer, Felix Meiner, Leipzig 1910-13 (abbreviated as SW).
- Schleiermacher F., *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, ed. by H.-J. Birkner und G. Ebeling, H. Fischer, H. Kimmerle, K.-V. Selge, de Gruyter, Berlin-New York 1980 (abbreviated as KGA).
- Schleiermacher F., *Ästhetik. Über den Begriff der Kunst*, ed. by T. Lehnerer, Felix Meiner, Hamburg 1984 (abbreviated as ÄL).
- Schleiermacher F., *Dialektik*, ed. by M. Frank, 2 Bänden, Surhkamp, Frankfurt a.M. 2001 (abbreviated as D).
- Schleiermacher F., *Ästhetik (1833/33). Über den Begriff der Kunst (1831-1833)*, ed. by H. Kelm, Meiner, Hamburg 2018 (abbreviated as NS).
- Scholtz G., *Die Philosophie Schleiermachers*, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt 1984.
- Simondon G., *L'individuation à la lumière des notions de forme et d'information*, Jérôme Millon, Paris 2005.
- Stöckmann E., *Anthropologische Ästhetik. Philosophie, Psychologie und ästhetische Theorie der Emotionen in der Diskurs der Aufklärung*, Niemeyer, Tübingen 2009.
- Thouard D., *L'éthique de l'individualité chez Schleiermacher*, in "Archives de Philosophie", 77, 2, 2014, pp. 281-299.
- Tice T., 'Schleiermacher's Psychology: An Early Modern Approach, a Challenge to Current Tendencies', in G. Meckenstock, J. Ringleben (eds.), *Schleiermacher und die wissenschaftliche Kultur des Christentums*, de Gruyter, Berlin-New York 1991, pp. 509-521.
- Timm H., *Die heilige Revolution. Schleiermacher – Novalis – Friedrich Schlegel*, Syndikat, Frankfurt a.M. 1978.

- Voskanian A., 'Warum Schleiermacher kein Romantiker ist', in U. Barth, C.-D. Osthövene (eds.), *200 Jahre „Reden Über die Religion“. Akten des 1. Internationalen Kongresses der Schleiermacher-Gesellschaft. Halle 14.-17. März 1999*, de Gruyter, Berlin-New York 2000, pp. 574-582.
- Wellek R., *A History of Modern Criticism. 1750-1950*, vol. 2, Yale University Press, New Haven and London 1955.
- Wetz F.J., 'Trieb', in J. Ritter *et al.* (eds.), *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, vol. 10, Schwabe & co. AG., Basel 1998, pp. 1483-1488.
- Wind E., 'Warburgs Begriff der Kulturwissenschaft und seine Bedeutung für die Ästhetik' (1930), in D. Wuttke (ed.), *Aby Warburg. Ausgewählte Schriften und Würdigungen*, Koerner, Baden-Baden 1992, pp. 401-417.
- Zammito J.H., *The Gestation of German Biology. Philosophy and Physiology from Stahl to Schelling*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 2018.