

# A Five-Dimensional Approach to Conceptualizing the Interplay of Image, Emotions, and Senses\*

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## Introduction

The chief argument of this paper is that art reception and visual perception are complex mechanism involving cognitions, emotions, and sensations which can be understood and analyzed on five dimensions. By doing so, this paper not only lays out an organizing categorization to analyze the interplay of artworks and art viewers but also introduces an approach to analyzing such a complexly intertwining process through which different kinds of cognitive, emotional and sensational engagement with artworks, especially painting can be understood. The five dimensions are the expressed, which is what a painting's contents; the dimension of the method, which includes the methods, techniques, or approaches adopted by a painter to depict the represented; the dimension of the picture, which is the painting itself as an object showing the presented features on the canvas or on a surface as a denotation system or a depiction by presenting the pictorial cues of the painting; the dimension of the unfolding process, carried out by the spectator when unfolding the presentation of a painting's pictorial features; and the dimension of the dwelling process, which encompasses the effects or emotions experienced by the spectator as induced in the process of unfolding the painting's pictorial features while contemplating a painting. This five-dimensional model is inspired by scholars whose works analyze art reception in

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different aspects. The major scholarly works selected in this paper are Ernst Gombrich's *Art and Illusion*; Nelson Goodman's *Of Mind and Other Matters*; Leon B. Alberti's *On Painting*; Svetlana Alpers's *The Art of Describing*; Norman Bryson's *Vision and Painting*; Gilles Deleuze's *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*; and Michael Fried's *Absorption and Theatricality*. These scholarly works bring light to the artistic appreciation in terms of the interplaying relationship between the artwork and the viewer and the intertwining experiences involving cognitions, emotions, and sensations which take place on the five dimensions.

I argue that by adopting this five-dimensional approach, the extremely intertwining and tangling process of art reception can be traced to a high level of clarity, i.e. to know from where the experiences emerge and to which place those experiences go while looking at paintings. When we say the following expressions, we are not clear about from where our sensations, emotions or cognitions emerge and about to which place they go. The examples of our emotional expression are as follows. „This painting makes me sad because it reminds me of my childhood unhappiness.” „I feel happy when I'm looking at this painting because it shows a very delightful event of life.” „I'm very attracted to this lady in the painting and I can look at her forever because I keep wondering what happened to her so that she has such a depressed look on her face. I am strongly fascinated.” „It feels very amazing that I am experiencing a journey while unfolding the development of the brushstrokes in the painting. Following the lines of each brushstroke is like following what the artist was doing while painting this work. I feel the artist's trampling heart was pounding and feel his/her bumpy breaths. Sometimes, I can feel his/her anger, tranquility, excitement, etc.” From these expressions, we would all agree that sad, happy, painful, calm, fascinated, angry, tranquil, are emotions.

Other emotional expressions are more related to our cognitive thinking and sensual perception. For example, „It feels very painful for me to look at this painting because the representation of all the

depicted entities is not based on the linear perspective and the pictorial construction is not correct.” „It is very wonderful to look at this painting because the color is so pure and powerful that I forget all the trouble I have in my life. I feel very calm while looking at this painting.” It is for sure that thinking about linear perspective and pictorial ways of representing things requires our cognitions; and that being overwhelmed while sensing powerful colors are an experience of our sensation. All of the above could happen for the same person at the same time or within very short period of time while looking at a painting. Since there is so much going on, it is very difficult to understand what exactly is happening. My five-dimensional approach is a way to help understand how these tangled up and interrelated experiences can be analyzed and traced in terms of the five dimensions.

It should be emphasized that all the five dimensions are not separated, not mutually exclusive, not hierarchically different but interrelated and intertwined with each other. It is exactly because they are so interrelated and intertwined with each other that my five-dimensional approach is an organizing and analytical structure to unfold the extremely complex viewing process during which different experiences come into play at the same time; and to get to see how they grow on and interact with each other. In other words, although my five-dimensional approach may look like a stratifying approach to analyzing them, this approach is actually inferring that our thoughts (cognition), feelings (emotion), and sensual perception (sensation) cannot be separated. The focus of this study is not to answer the question: What does it mean by these adjectives (sad, happy, painful, calm, fascinated, angry, tranquil, overwhelmed, pure, powerful, etc.)? It is also not to analyze how the environmental context when viewing a painting (the lighting, the physical place exhibiting the painting, etc.) affects the viewer's experience; and not to go into the further details of the mechanism in which those experiences of art reception emerge and evolve. This is because the mechanism is so complex that the analysis of it would too huge and long to be put forth in one paper. The major contribution of this paper is to give an analytical

structure and investigating framework in order to further examine art reception and visual experience of looking at paintings.

This paper will put forth the five dimensions in the following sequence. Before diving into the five dimensions, it is important to understand the relativity between art creation and art reception. The latter is the focus of this paper. Ernst Gombrich's inspiring idea of image making and image reading which highlights the interactive relativity of the artist's artwork and the viewer's experience. Gombrich's relativity lays down an important fundamental structure for us to understand the five dimensions which further analyze art reception in terms of cognition, emotion, and sensation. After having had the foundation of Gombrich's relativity, the first dimension of the expressed is developed as I am inspired by Goodman's idea of the what and the how. He foregrounds the epistemological relativity between what is experienced by the viewer and how the viewer experiences what s/he experiences. His relativity of the what and the how is further explained in terms of his ideas of the worlds and visions in a plural form. Such a plural understanding sheds light on the dimension of the expressed as a general message that a painting is felt or experienced by the viewer. It also explains in what sense people may have many different or contradictory experiences while looking at the same painting because there are worlds instead of the world as argued by Goodman. Usually, people's expressions of what they feel (calm, absorbed, sad, etc.) and think are induced by the general message as expressed in a painting.

The other four dimensions are more specific than the dimension of the expressed. My analysis of Alberti's discussion of linear perspective in terms of its geometrical and mathematical method for pictorial construction will bring about the second dimension of the method which usually arouses so much cognitive investigation; specially, when the viewer is loaded with traditional views of European painting. Basing on such tradition, the viewer may experience discomfort or even 'headaches' while looking at a painting without a correct perspective. My discussion of Alpers's examination on the

visual natures of the describing objectivity will bring about the dimension of the picture which lays down the foundation for the fourth and fifth dimensions of the unfolding process and the dwelling process. This is because when the surface of a painting is paid attention to so much that it is transformed to be ontologically independent as a picture by itself, then the painting becomes an independent physical surface on which the viewer focuses.

Once the viewer pays so much attention to the tiny minute details of all the pictorial cues, his/her viewing process can deliberately become an in-depth unfolding process of the pictorial cues, i.e. dimension of the unfolding process. This dimension is developed when I am inspired by Bryson's idea of durational temporality in his analysis of the logic of gaze and the logic of glance. Moreover, Alpers's investigation helps to understand Deleuze's idea of sensation as some direct experiences without going through the cognitive faculty in our brain. This is also because only when the picture becomes the viewer's focus, do the physical properties of a painting (like color and non-representational features) become directly impactful to the viewer. Then, the fifth dimension of the dwelling process in a sensational way can be experienced. However, there is a very different side of the fifth dimension to which I relate Fried's idea of being absorbed and theatricality, i.e. the dwelling process in a theatrical sense. In this sense this dwelling process is totally opposite to the dwelling process in a sensational way because this dwelling process requires the least level of the viewer's attention paid to the painting's surface while looking at a painting. The viewer's focus is on the drama or theatrical effects as induced by the pictorial features in order to attend the highest level of being absorbed and of theatricality. Paying his/her attention to the painting's physical surface as an ontologically independent entity would lower or kill the feasibility to dwell into or to be absorbed into the scene as theatrically depicted in the painting. In other words, the dimension of dwelling process in a sensational way and in a theatrical sense are very different as the former is based on the viewer's very high level of attention paid to the painting's surface but the latter is the opposite.

To embark the journey of the five dimensions in order to see how our cognitions, emotions, and sensations emerge from where and to which place while looking at paintings, I start with Gombrich.

### **Gombrich's Interactive Relativity between Image Making and Image Reading (in *Art and Illusion*)**

The relativity of art creation and art reception is emphasized through Gombrich's book. While his „image making” is on the side of art creation, his „image reading” is on the side of art reception. There are emotions in the process of creating an art work but this paper is concerned about the art reception. Gombrich emphasizes that before the process of image reading, the viewer has already had conscious or unconscious presuppositions or presumptions. They are the conventions, traditions, expectations, etc.<sup>1</sup> He stresses that there is no pure picture viewing or „pure seeing” or ‘innocent eye’ in the process of seeing during which the view selects, discriminates, differentiates, classifies, categorizes, modifies, attributes, interprets, articulates, etc.<sup>2</sup> Seeing is a very complex process. But Gombrich does not go into the details from and to where, by what, and how the view carries out this complex process of seeing. This paper does not focus on the side of image making/art creation but focuses on the side of image reading/art reception. The five-dimensional approach is an attempt to fill this huge gap and to clarify this big mystery on the side of art reception, especially when it involves our cognitive, emotional, and sensational perceptions. The question is: What is going on during the process of seeing/image reading? Adopting the five-dimension approach to answering this question is a starting point to locate where our emotions react to; to locate which dimension(s) induce(s) our emotions, cognitions, and sensations are on the side of art reception. The following scholars inspire me to see and identify them.

- 1 Ernst H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation*, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1969, c.1960, p. 89 and p. 205.
- 2 Gombrich, *Art and Illusion*, 1960, p. 223.

### **The Expressed: Goodman's Epistemological Relativity between the What and the How (in *Of Mind and Other Matter*)**

If an art work is a representational system, Goodman makes an epistemological distinction between what the system represents and how the system represents what is represented, i.e. the what (what is told or represented) and the how (the method of telling).<sup>3</sup> He goes into further details about „the-what” worlds and argues that there is *no* one world but there are many worlds.<sup>4</sup> In his own words, the represented is termed as ‘the world’ or ‘the worlds.’<sup>5</sup> He writes, „For there is, I maintain, no such thing as the real world, no unique ready-made, absolute reality apart from and independent of all versions and visions.”<sup>6</sup> He also writes, „Realism, like reality, is multiple and evanescent, and no one account of it will do.”<sup>7</sup> This relativity does not lie in the epistemological relationship between image making and image reading, like Gombrich, but in the epistemological relationship between the how (method of image making) and the what (the represented or the world). I agree with Goodman’s distinction between the what and the how but I want to emphasize that the aspects of the What and the How in this paper are on the side of art reception (image reading). What the artist intentionally tried to say and how s/he did that are on the side of art creation which is not the concern of this paper.

Many experiences or emotions emerge on the dimension of the expressed as related to Goodman’s idea of the what. For example, „This painting makes me sad because it reminds me of my childhood unhappiness.” „I feel happy when I’m looking at this painting because it shows a very delightful event of life.” These two expressions of contradictory emotions (feeling sad and happy) emerge from the

3 Nelson Goodman, *Of Mind and Other Matters*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: Harvard University Press, 1984, p. 125.

4 Goodman, *Of Mind and Other Matters*, 1984, p. 127.

5 Nelson Goodman, *Of Mind and Other Matters*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: Harvard University Press, 1984, p. 14, pp. 30-44, pp. 66-99, p. 127, p. 138, p. 143, p. 147, etc.

6 Goodman, *Of Mind and Other Matters*, 1984, p. 127.

7 Goodman, *Of Mind and Other Matters*, 1984, p. 130.

same dimension of the expressed. The first one expresses something related to a sad childhood scenario which induces the viewer to think about his own unhappy past. The second one expresses some life scenario of delight which triggers the viewer to feel happy. In other words, there could be hundreds of different emotions as experienced by the viewer but if their feelings are induced from the same 'origin' as what is expressed, their experiences can be traced on the dimension of the expressed. In the case of opposite experiences as induced by the same painting, Goodman's idea of the plural worlds can 'justify' why the same painting triggers people to have different or opposite emotions because the relativity is that there is no one world but many worlds, thus the expressed is experienced in many ways.

#### **The Method: Alberti's Geometrical and Mathematical Method for Pictorial Understanding (in *On Painting*)**

This section illustrates in what sense Alberti's *On Painting* is the mathematical and geometrical method of representing nature which induces various experiences of art reception. By doing so, this is to show that Alberti's conception of linear perspective helps to clarify the exemplifying features on the dimension of the method from which the viewer's experiences of cognition and emotion emerge while looking at paintings. For example, „It feels very painful for me to look at this painting because the representation of all the depicted entities is not based on the linear perspective and the pictorial construction is not correct.” This expression involves feelings and cognitive analysis at the same time. There are many pieces of historical evident showing how much Europeans felt very painful when they found the perspective of Chinese paintings they saw incorrect.<sup>8</sup> The key point here is that no matter how much and why the viewer finds the painting complicated or problematic, his/her experience is on or related to the dimension of the method.

8 This is analyzed in detail in my PhD thesis entitled „*The European Reception of Chinese Painting and Calligraphy after 1600 and before 1860.*”

Although *On Painting* was meant to be a product for painters as the book's target reader and its discussion addresses the painting method as a product of a painter, his theorization of linear perspective system has been well known to common viewers in the West. Thus, viewers who are familiar with this system would have experiences related to the method of linear perspective commonly practiced in Western painting. In *On Painting*, Albert writes, „I therefore ask that my work be accepted as the product not of a pure mathematician but only of a painter.”<sup>9</sup> Through the whole book, Alberti expresses a number of his ideas of what a painter should be and should do. For example, he states that the painter is like the Creator.<sup>10</sup> He also writes, „I want the painter, as far as he is able, to be learned in all the liberal arts, but I wish him above all to have a good knowledge of geometry.”<sup>11</sup> This kind of expressions illustrates that his target reader is mainly the painter. After his theorization of linear perspective system, Western painting is commonly constructed based on the system with which the viewer is also familiar. He illustrates the painting making process in three stages.<sup>12</sup>

Alberti's concept of art creation has a lot to do with his use of the phrase, „imitating Nature”<sup>13</sup> and what he writes about the practical methodology of pictorial representation in painting is highly geometrical and mathematical.<sup>14</sup> A big part of his theorization of mathematical linear perspective in his work is about the method of imitating

9 Alberti, *On Painting Leon Battista Alberti*, 1991, p. 37.

10 Alberti, *On Painting Leon Battista Alberti*, 1991, p. 61.

11 Alberti, *On Painting Leon Battista Alberti*, 1991, p. 88.

12 Alberti, *On Painting Leon Battista Alberti*, 1991, pp. 54-58.

13 In *On Painting*, Albert writes, 'We should apply ourselves with all our thought and attention to imitating her [Nature].' Quoted from Leon B. Alberti, *On Painting Leon Battista Alberti*, trans. Cecil Grayson, 1972, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1991, p. 72.

14 As Martin Kemp puts it, '[Alberti] saw the geometrical construction of space as a prerequisite for proper painting.' Quoted from Martin Kemp, *The Science of Art: Optical Themes in Western Art from Brunelleschi to Seurat*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990, p.21. And in Alberti's own words, In the very beginning of *On Painting* (Book 1), he writes, 'In writing about painting in these short books, we will, to make our discourse clearer, first take from mathematicians those things which seem relevant to the subject.' Quoted from Alberti, *On Painting Leon Battista Alberti*, 1991, p.37. Alberti also writes, '[painting is] completely mathematical, concerning the roots in nature from which arise this graceful and most noble art.' Quoted from Kemp, *The Science of Art*, 1990, pp.21-22.

Nature by constructing perspective. Since then the practice of constructing a perspectival space has been very common in Western painting. Thus, when we are talking about pictorial features exhibited in a painting in terms of its strong illusionistic effect of representing three-dimensional objects and space on a two-dimensional surface, we are usually referring to the effect 'created' through constructing a pictorial three-dimensionality based on the mathematical linear perspective theorized by Alberti. On top of Alberti's emphasis on the mathematical and geometrical three-dimensionality, the phrase 'imitating Nature' as used by Alberti is usually associated with the idea of making a copy of Nature with a high level of mathematical accuracy and with a strong fidelity of geometrical three-dimensionality. This is to say that his book is about the specific method used by a painter to achieve this goal. It thus also explains how the dimension of the method comes into sight.

Alberti's step-by-step 'excellent method' is his mathematical and geometrical theorization of how to construct a realistic pictorial space. Appendix A is to further illustrate his theorization in detail. This means that Alberti's *On Painting* focuses on discussing the method of representing what a painter tries to represent in a painting with a high level of three-dimensionality which is in terms of geometrical and mathematical construction. Since his conception of such construction emphasizes the specific methods used by a painter to represent Nature, it affects what the viewer experiences especially, on the dimension of the method. Alberti, however, does not address the issue of how the spectator reads his pictorial construction of perspective. He thus does not focus on the dimensions of the viewing and the experienced. These dimensions are addressed by other theorists.

In Alberti's model, the emphasis on geometry and mathematics is obvious. Such a model of mathematical linear perspective had been commonly practiced since the Renaissance.

**The Picture: Alpers's Visual Natures of the Describing Objectivity (in *The Art of Describing*)**

A big part of her book is concerned with analyzing the visual qualities of describing objectivity in detail when discussing Dutch realism.<sup>15</sup> By focusing on the visual qualities exhibited on a painting, she reminds us to pay a very high level of attention to the painting surface. When a painting's surface is focused on, the physical characteristics of the surface are emphasized at the same time. This leads to an emphasis on the painting's physical existence. When the physical existence of a painting as an object is demanding attention, the painting itself becomes an ontologically independent entity that exists in front of the viewer. Then the painting is thus also a physical object called a 'picture' that is independent from the image as embodied in it. The notion that a painting is a physical object (a picture) sets the picture apart as an independent entity in relation to the spectator in the viewing process. This notion thus brings light to the dimension of the picture. As I have mentioned before, when the viewer's attention is paid to the surface, it lays down a primary precondition for the emergence of the dimensions of the unfolding and the dwelling in a sensational way, which will be analyze after this session.

In her book, Alpers does not address the issue concerning the relative relationship between the method and the represented as Gombrich and Goodman do. She also does not discuss any questions about how the visual qualities are experienced by the spectator from the spectator's point of view. Instead, these questions related to the viewing process are addressed by Fried and Bryson. I will also talk about Deleuze in order to understand how the painting's physical properties or the non-representational pictorial features on the painting's surface induce our sensations and emotions directly without going through the cognitive faculty of our brain. Deleuze unfolds this by explaining Francis Bacon's paintings in terms of direct sensation. Thus, Alpers's discussion is a critical point for me to develop the

15 Svetlana Alpers, *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983, p. xxiv, p. 26, etc.

fourth and fifth dimensions of the unfolding process and the dwelling process. She brings light to the painting's surface and helps the viewer to 'transform' it as an ontologically independent entity so that the dimension of the picture becomes obvious and significant.

### **The Unfolding Process: Bryson's Viewing Effect of Durational Temporality (in *Vision and Painting*)**

By explaining how the logic of glance supports the viewer to experience durational time through the process of unfolding pictorial elements (particularly brushwork), Bryson's explanation sheds light on the dimension of the unfolding process. Although Bryson focuses on the viewing process and the experiences that the spectator has in general, Bryson particularly emphasizes the specific effect of experiencing 'lasting' time (durational time). By analyzing the difference between the logic of the glance and the logic of the gaze in painting, Bryson argues that paintings of Western realism (in the logic of the gaze) lack the effect of durational temporality in that the spectator does not experience time with lasting effect in duration.

According to Bryson, the painting of the Glance entails two features which enable the viewer to experience durational time. First, the viewing process is socially contextualized. Second, the durational temporality is experienced by the viewer in his viewing process. In contrast, the painting of the Gaze does not entail these two features. Bryson describes the painting of the Gaze as the painting of the past or the sign of Death.<sup>16</sup> But Bryson does not explain in detail how or in what way the painting of the Gaze cannot achieve these two features. He only illustrates in what way the painting of the Gaze can transform into the painting of the Glance. He points out that the painting of the Glance addresses vision in the durational temporality of the viewing subject.<sup>17</sup> In my understanding, experiencing durational temporality by the viewer is the key to achieve the vision of

16 Norman Bryson, *Vision and Painting: The Logic of the Gaze*, London: The Macmillan Press, 1983, p. 89.

17 Bryson, *Vision and Painting*, 1983, p. 94.

the Glance in the process of viewing a painting. Based on Bryson's analysis of durational temporality, if a painting does not exhibit the traces of brushstroke, then the viewer of the painting cannot re-experience the formation of the brushstrokes, and the durational temporality cannot be experienced by the viewer. This painting is thus a painting without durational temporality. This kind of painting is the painting of the Gaze.

By durational temporality, Bryson means that the viewer experiences time in duration while he is unfolding the traces of brushstroke and all the details of their formation. He goes on in detail about the mechanism of experiencing durational temporality. He argues that obviously displaying the physicality of oil paint on the canvas of a painting can bring about the experience of durational temporality to the viewer when viewing the painting. Such a painting is thus a painting of the Glance which entails the durational temporality as experienced in the process of viewing. He notes that the variable viscosity of the pigment has a strong capability of showing the temporal trace.<sup>18</sup> This kind of temporal trace entails the experience of durational temporality. Bryson argues that showing the temporal trace in painting is a 'structural way' (his term „deictical expression”)<sup>19</sup> to transform the painting of the Gaze to be the painting of the Glance in which the viewing process is socially contextualized. But he does not clearly explain how a viewer sees the physicality of oil paint as the traces of brushstroke and then experiences durational temporality. Bryson also does not explain how exhibiting the physicality of oil paint on the canvas can cause the viewing process to be socially contextualized and become the painting of the Glance. In short, when the process of unfolding the traces of brushstrokes and when their formation takes place, then durational temporality can be experienced by the viewer. Such a durational temporality constitutes the painting of the Glance.

18 Bryson, *Vision and Painting*, 1983, p. 92.

19 ('structural way' is my understanding of Bryson's word 'deictical expression' on p. 92. It basically means seeing painting as a semiotic and somatic regime.)

Bryson's „durational temporality” brings light to the dimension of the unfolding process, which carried out by the spectator when unfolding the development of a painting's pictorial features. An example of viewing experience related to this dimension could be „It feels very amazing that I am experiencing a journey of the very process in which the entire depiction is being formed while unfolding the development of the brushstrokes in the painting. Following the lines of each brushstroke is like following what the artist was doing while painting this work. I feel the artist's trampling heart was pounding, and feel his/her bumpy breaths. Sometimes, I can feel his/her anger, tranquility, excitement, etc.” In this expression, how and what the viewer feels or thinks are highly related to his/her unfolding process.

This would often be the case when the viewer is looking at Chinese ink paintings with very much brushwork in general and many textual strokes in particular.<sup>20</sup> The spectator's experiences might be varied but they usually would use descriptions like ‘full of animation and vividness,’ ‘a high level of vitality and resonance found in nature.’ These expressions sound very broad but they could be understood as the visual perception emerging during the process of unfolding brushwork, which refers to the dimension of the unfolding process.<sup>21</sup>

20 Textual strokes are meant to convey the visual textures or qualities of the depicted entities by displaying usually dry and light ink application. In that way, the viewer can trace the formation of each stroke easily.

21 However, in my opinion, the process of unfolding the traces of brushstrokes and their formation is not the only way to experience durational temporality. For example, many Western landscape paintings ‘lead’ the viewer to ‘go into’ the landscape/scenery depicted in the painting. They are not like many Chinese landscape paintings in which the viewer can unfold the traces of brushstrokes. Instead, the viewer does have the feeling of wondering around in nature. Once the viewer has the sense that he/she is wondering around in the depicted scenery by unfolding various qualities of the scenery, the viewer is experiencing the durational temporality as described by Bryson. Unfolding brushstrokes is one of the ways in which the durational temporality can be experienced.

**The Dwelling Process in a Sensational Way: Deleuze's Logic of Direct Sensation (in *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*)**

The logic of sensation put forth by Deleuze brings light to the dimension of the dwelling process in a sensational way. He illustrates in detail how the physical natures and non-representational features of a painting work on the viewer by analyzing Francis Bacon's paintings. Deleuze considers Bacon's works as paintings of sensation. By emphasizing the nervous system, the body, the instinct, the non-representational, Deleuze points out a particular kind of viewing experience which is not about what a painting is meant to say to us. In other words, the signified meanings behind the painting are not the logic of sensation because the signified meanings are understood through the brain not the nervous system or the body. According to Deleuze, the physical material properties of a painting (e.g. various colors) do have direct impacts on the viewer without going through the brain. What impacts and what emotions could be induced by them is another story. Deleuze emphasizes that sensation acts immediately upon the nervous system.<sup>22</sup> He says the following: „Color is in the body, sensation is in the body, and not in the air.”<sup>23</sup> He makes a distinction between two kinds of painting. He asserts that „some paint comes across directly onto the nervous system and other paint tells you the story in a long diatribe through the brain.”<sup>24</sup> „Sensation is what determines instinct at a particular moment.”<sup>25</sup> „Between a color, a taste, a touch, a smell, a noise, a weight, there would be an existential communication that would constitute the ‘pathic’ (non-representational) moment of the sensation.”<sup>26</sup>

An example of the viewer's experience is „It is very wonderful to look at this painting because the color is so pure and powerful that I forget all the trouble I have in my life. I don't think of anything in

22 Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, London: Continuum, 2003, p. 34.

23 Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, 2003, p. 35.

24 Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, 2003, p. 35 and p. 36.

25 Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, 2003, p. 39.

26 Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, 2003, p. 42.

front it. I feel very calm while looking at this painting.” Sometimes, we hear people say, „I am so overwhelmed by what is there even though I totally don’t understand what it means. I just feel being taken over by it without knowing what takes me over.” The experiences of having calm emotion and of being taken over emerge from the dimension of the dwelling process. It requires the viewer to pay very much attention to the painting’s direct physical properties like colors and its non-representational pictorial features without involving very much cognitive thinking for understanding what the properties and features mean. This is what I mean by the dwelling process in a sensational way. Deleuze explains in detail how Bacon’s paintings stop the viewer from intellectually understanding the signified messages and how his paintings engage the viewer to directly feel and sense what it is in the painting. That is what Deleuze calls ‘the logic of sensation.’ In the logic of sensation, the viewer does not intellectually understand the painting if s/he wants to experience the ‘pathic’ (non-representational) moment of the sensation while looking at the painting. However, the next one is the dimension of the dwelling process in a theatrical sense which on the other hand, requires the spectator *not* to do so. Otherwise, it would lower or kill the experience of being absorbed and the effect of theatricality. What the viewer experiences is the effect of absorption and theatricality.

### **The Dwelling Process in a Theatrical Sense: Fried’s Viewing Effects of Theatricality and Being Absorbed (in *Absorption and Theatricality*)**

Fried’s analysis of the viewing process in three hierarchical levels of absorption or theatricality brings light to the dwelling process in a theatrical sense. The three levels are first, the painting is „a representation of absorptive states and activities” and the viewer gazes at the painting intensively.<sup>27</sup> Second, the painting is „a representation of action and passion” and the viewer is captivated or absorbed through

27 Michael Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California, 1980, p. 19, p. 21, p. 66, etc.

experiencing a strong dramatic illusion („stage realism”).<sup>28</sup> Third (the highest level), the painting is not in front of the viewer because the viewer is already absorbed *into* the painting („the fiction of physically entering a painting”).<sup>29</sup> The viewer ‘forgets’ where s/he is and „a new subject” is formed.<sup>30</sup> These three levels are on the dimension of the dwelling process generally and in a theatrical sense particularly, which encompasses the viewing experience or emotions as experienced by the spectator in the process of contemplating a painting and ‘going into’ it. My detailed analysis of Fried’s three hierarchical levels is in Appendix B.

From the viewer’s point of view, Fried explains how a painting transforms the represented into ‘the dwelled on’ and he analyzes the whole process in great detail from what is dwelled on to what is experienced. It definitely takes time to attain Fried’s highest level of theatricality at which the ‘new subject’ can be formed. Thus, the viewer needs to spend some time to dwell on the depicted scene or scenario in the painting or to contemplate the painting for a while. His analysis of the effects as experienced by the ‘new subject’ illustrates the critical features the dwelling process in a theatrical sense on this dimension. For example, „I’m very attracted to this lady in the painting and I can look at her forever because I keep wondering what happened to her so that she has such a depressed look on her face. I am strongly fascinated. It feels like she is right in front of me, and like I am there with her in person too.” It is the ‘what-is-dwelled-on’ part envisions the dimension of the dwelling process. When the effect gets so high that, the ‘what-is-experienced’ becomes totally theatrical, and envisions the dimension of the dwelling process in a theatrical sense.

On the dimension of the dwelling process, the major difference between the sensation way and the theatrical sense is that the theatrical one induces the viewer to see the depicted entity or scenario and

28 Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality*, 1980, p. 75, p. 81, and the whole Chapter Two.

29 Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality*, 1980, p. 118 and p. 122.

30 Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality*, 1980, p. 132, p. 128, and p. 134.

to understand the meanings in this entity but the sensational one induces the viewer to keep focusing on what is mainly on the surface of the painting in order to see and feel its physical properties directly. For example, in the case of the sensational way, the viewer sees red mainly without thinking whether it is blood or a lipstick impression. In the case of the theatrical sense, the viewer sees blood or a lipstick impression even though s/he is aware that the color is red.

### Conclusion

I have argued that the five dimensions on which cognitive, emotional and sensational engagements take place are the dimensions of the expressed, the method, the picture, the unfolding process, the dwelling process in a sensational way and in a theatrical sense. As mentioned above, I came up with this five-dimensional approach after being inspired by the six books that they are analyzed in this paper. By adopting this five-dimensional approach, we can imagine that sometimes, one dimension would be very dominant; but sometimes, there would be more than two or even all five dimensions are in operation as well as our cognitions, emotions, and sensations are in force at the same time.

The importance of adopting this five-dimensional approach is that without it, we can still be able to identify thoughts, feelings, sensual experiences as emerged in the process of looking at paintings but it is not clear where they are from and where they are reacting to. The five dimensions are my suggestions of the places from and to where our cognitions, emotions, and sensations are. Being clear about where they are from and where they are reacting to helps us see a fuller and clearer picture of art reception. Painting is not only an image signifying cultural meanings behind it but also a platform on which complex viewing mechanism takes place. On the dimension of the expressed, we see/read a painting in terms of the message as conveyed to us in general. On the dimension of the method, we become aware of that when the viewer is not happy about some particular pictorial constructions or some ways of organizing the depic-

tion, s/he may or may not have certain feelings or emotions. However, on the dimension of the picture, we get to know more about the significance and the importance of a painting as an ontological independent entity. This enables the viewer to pay full attention to the painting surface's physical properties and its pictorial non-representational features. This dimension is a precondition for the emergence of the final two dimensions. On the dimension of the unfolding process, we understand that unfolding pictorial features of what is presented on a painting's surface entails the experience of durational temporality which at the same time re-presents what was going on with the artist while forming the pictorial features. Finally, the dimension of the dwelling process in a sensational way and in a theatrical sense gives us an in-depth understanding about what happens when people are contemplating a painting for a long time. It does take time to attain the maximum level of sensational dwelling even though it does not involve our cognitive analysis or understanding of what it means. Otherwise, our cognition would lower or kill the sensational dwelling process. However, it requires very much cognitive imagination and understanding for the viewer to dwell on the depicted entity or scenario in order to be 'inside' the pictorial space. When the viewer is 'transported' from a lower level of absorption to the highest hierarchy of theatricality, a 'new subject' emerges in a theatrical sense. In the state of being a 'new subject' the level of theatricality is maximum and is at the climax of such a dwelling process. Although these two ways of dwelling process are opposite to each other in terms of our cognition involvement, they both are on the dimension of the dwelling.

As emphasized at the beginning of this paper, the five-dimensional approach is an analytical structure to investigate the complex mechanism of the spectator's viewing process. After locating on which dimension(s) the viewing experience(s) take(s) place, we can go into the further details of each dimension and to see deeper how all of them affect and interact with each other. All the five dimensions are not separated, not mutually exclusive, not hierarchically dif-

ferent but interrelated and intertwined with each other. This five-dimensional approach to the analyzing the complex mechanism of art reception and visual perception in painting appreciation not only helps us to understand but also facilitates us to analyze these intricate human qualities as revealed in the process of looking at paintings.

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