
THE JOURNAL OF
PHILOSOPHICAL STUDIES
NO. 593

Modal Flexibility of Photographic Artworks

by

Yuichi AMITANI*

Postdoctoral Fellow

Center for Philosophy of Science, University of Pittsburgh

Abstract

Many philosophers support a type theory of repeatable artworks: an artwork is a type. Guy Rohrbaugh criticizes this theory and proposes an individuality theory of artwork: an artwork is an individual, not a type. One of his criticisms of the type theory is that artworks have *de re* modal flexibility which type theory does not accommodate. *The Steerage* could have been slightly more shaded, but according to the type theory, every print of *The Steerage* necessarily has exactly the same shades as it has. In this paper I argue that the individuality theory has its own problem with modal flexibility. Part of modal flexibility of a photographic artwork comes from the photographer's selection of a photograph for publication: Steiglitz may have chosen another photograph *B* as *The Steerage*, so *The Steerage* could have been photograph *B*, rather than photograph *A*. The individuality theory does not accommodate this type of modal flexibility.

Key words: modal flexibility, ontology of art, photographic artworks, type theory, individuality theory

I INTRODUCTION

Many philosophers still endorse the type theory in ontology of art, according to which some artworks are types. On this view, the novel *Emma*, for example, is a type, a token of which is a copy of *Emma*, and a copy of *Emma* is what it is because it shares a set of properties with all the other copies of *Emma*. Despite its adherents, the type theory remains controversial, of course, and many criticisms have been lodged against it over the years. Recently, Guy Rohrbaugh has added an especially interesting, compelling objection to the standard misgivings about the type theory.¹⁾ Concentrating on photographs, Rohrbaugh suggests that the type theory cannot accommodate the *modal flexibility* of artworks, which artworks possesses if they could have been slightly different. For example, intuitively, the photograph, *The Steerage*, could have been slightly darker than it actually is. And, indeed, most, if not all, artworks plausibly possess the sort of modal flexibility we naturally attribute to *The Steerage*. However, according to the type theory, every token (such as a print, a copy and a performance) of an artwork shares a specific set of properties. For instance, if the type theory is right, every possible print of *The Steerage* has the lightness and darkness actually manifested by the artwork. Thus, *The Steerage* could not be lighter or darker than it actually is. This motivates Rohrbaugh to construct another ontology that can accommodate the modal flexibility we believe artworks to possess. He proposes an *individuality theory* of artworks as one that can do so. On this view, artworks are historical individuals. This works, he supposes, because historical individuals, such as individual human beings, have modal flexibility: George W. Bush could have been different in countless ways—for example, he could have had a liver disorder due to alcoholism. If *The Steerage* is a historical individual, it too has modal flexibility—it could have been lighter or darker.

The importance of the modal flexibility of artworks is an important insight Rohrbaugh deserves credit for emphasizing. In this paper, however, I argue that he doesn't go quite far enough. For artworks possess—in addition to the modal flexibility he recognizes—a special sort of modal flexibility that the individuality theory fails to explain. Specifically, his view overlooks a critical phase in the production of a photographic artwork

—*the selection of photographs for publication*. Therefore, the modal flexibility of photographic artworks, at least, constitutes a real counterexample to the individuality theory. In this respect then, it fares no better than the type theory, which evidently fails to accommodate any kind of modal flexibility. In addition, I suggest that the selections of authors pose a similar problem for both the individuality theory and the type theory.

II BACKGROUND

Type Theory Let us briefly review the structure of type theory. Type theory claims that some artworks, such novels or pieces of music, are non-spatiotemporal entities (or types), making their copies or performances tokens of them. Tokens of a certain type necessarily share a non-empty set of properties *S*, which are relevant to our aesthetic appreciation, and which are individuated by that set. For example, individual copies of *Emma* are instances of *Emma*: they necessarily share a certain sequence of sentences, which may not be shared by any other literary work. Many type theorists start their argument by pointing out that a literary or musical artwork is not identical to a physical object (a copy or performance).²⁾ My copy of *Anna Karenina* is underlined, but this does not mean *Anna Karenina* itself is underlined. But if my copy were identical to the novel *Anna Karenina*, both would share all the the same properties. So, my copy is not identical to the artwork, *Anna Karenina*. Type theorists also argue that their theory can explain our dealings with literary and musical artworks. For instance, we appreciate the same artwork *Emma* through numerically and qualitatively different copies. Type theorists can make sense of this, because those copies are tokens of the *same* work. For another example, although copies of *Emma* differ in many ways (e.g., size of text), they share the same sequence of sentences. Type theorists can account for this because all tokens of the same work share a set of properties *S*. Type theorists may disagree on what kind of features belong to the set of those essential properties *S*. Nevertheless, all agree that each artwork has some pattern or structure without which we cannot appreciate the artwork (e.g., a sequence of sentences or a sound structure) and that those *structural features* belong to *S*. But extrinsic features such as being-authored-by-its-composer (or novelist, etc.) and historical context may also belong to such sets³⁾: perhaps *Für Elise* has

being-composed-by-Beethoven among the set S . Perhaps, more radically, one may think that *Für Elise* is an event-type, which has its sound structure and heuristic path (the particular way in which Beethoven discovered the sound structure of *Für Elise*) as identifying elements.⁴⁾ But whatever feature one considers essential does not change the fact that some features are possessed by all the tokens of that artwork in all possible worlds (where there is a token).

Everything I just said about literature and music is also true of photography. *The Steerage* is not identical to its negative or prints. Its tokens are spatiotemporal, but *The Steerage* itself is not. All and only tokens of it share a set of essential properties S , which include its particular picture composition, shade, and so on. So says the type theory.

A Problem for the Type Theory: Modal Flexibility Artworks seem to have modal profiles. Any artwork could have possessed different structural features, however slight the counterfactual change is. As one example, Da Vinci could have used slightly different colors when he painted the *Mona Lisa*. And Tolstoy could have started *Anna Karenina* with a slightly different sentence. Such is the *modal flexibility* of artworks. Of course, there is arguably some limitations concerning the modal flexibility of artworks — *Anna Karenina* could not have been the Eiffel tower — but this does not change the fact that the structural features of artworks can differ somewhat from what they actually are.

This causes a problem for the type theory. As the type theory would have it, an artwork necessarily is characterized by a non-empty set of properties S . Suppose that *Anna Karenina* necessarily is characterized by the set of properties K , say, a particular sequence of sentences. Type theorists face a dilemma here: if copies of *Anna Karenina* start with a slightly different opening sentence in a possible world ω , then *Anna Karenina* is characterized by another set of properties K' , instead of K , there. Therefore, if type theorists insist that *Anna Karenina* is necessarily characterized by K , those copies in ω are *not* of *Anna Karenina*, which is counterintuitive. On the other hand, if they accept modal flexibilities, they have to give up their core claim that all copies of *Anna Karenina* necessarily have K . Type theorists cannot accept either consequence.

Rohrbaugh's individuality theory Rohrbaugh proposes an individuality theory of artworks and claims that it can account for modal flexibility. Since photography is Rohrbaugh's main subject, we will focus on it hereafter. The same modal flexibility worries apply to photography as they do to novels: for example, *The Steerage* could have had a slightly different composition than it does have, had Stieglitz moved his camera a little bit to the right. If *The Steerage* has a particular composition as its essence, then it does not have a different composition in any possible world.

Rohrbaugh makes two claims. First, if a photograph is to be taken to be an individual, one can explain its modal flexibility. Second, the modal flexibility in question is *de re* modality.⁵⁾ Let's start with the first point. Rohrbaugh agrees with the type theory that a photograph is not identical with its prints or negative. But a photograph is not a type, but rather a "'high-level' particular."⁶⁾ When they come into existence (typically when a film is exposed) and go extinct (e.g., when all prints and negative are destroyed), so does the photograph. This makes a photograph a non-physical, but temporal being. A photograph also shares some properties of its embodiments and hence can change its properties over time. For example, if all of the prints and negative fade, the photograph fades.

Each photograph has its own causal history. Here causal history means a series of causes and effects concerning the structural features⁷⁾ and temporality of the object. For example, the prints and negative continue to exist spatiotemporally and they are causally connected in an appropriate way: prints are developed from the negative, which comes from a film and its exposure. If two prints are developed from different negatives or films, then there is no such causal interaction between them; they do not share the same causal history. Thus, they are prints of different photographs, however perceptually similar they might be. The causal history of a photograph helps us to understand how a photograph acquires modal flexibility, because its modal flexibility comes from counterfactual interventions to the causal history of the photograph, or more precisely, from counterfactual interventions to the causal interaction, which make its structural features the way they are. If a cloud had intervened on the causal interaction of the camera, the film and the object (passengers, etc.), *The Steerage*, would be darker.

Second, Rohrbaugh thinks that the modal flexibility of a photograph in

question is *de re* modality, that is, modality of that very object. When we ask whether *The Steerage* could have been darker, we do not ask whether an object which meets some conditions of being *The Steerage* in a possible world is darker than the object that meets those conditions in the actual world. Instead, we ask about modality of what is *The Steerage* in this world.

III SELECTION AND ANOTHER MODALITY

Rohrbaugh's model for photography seems to explain the modal flexibility of a photograph. However, his model seems to overlook one stage in the production process of a photograph (as an artwork) and thus has still trouble accounting for the modal flexibility of *The Steerage*, for example.

Consider the actual process by which a photograph is published as an artwork. When a photographer is shooting a scene, she rarely takes only one photograph of that scene. It is more common that she takes several, tens, or even hundreds of photographs of the same scene. She may check the negatives and choose only some for development and publication (or further selection), or she may develop all of them and then select one or several photographs for publication. In many cases, if not all, those 'candidate' photographs have similar structural features. Suppose Stieglitz made such a selection from two 'candidate' photographs when he published *The Steerage*.⁸⁾ He examined, we'll suppose, the two photographs, *A* and *B*, which came from different films, but still possessed similar structural features. Say he chose *A* for publication, and discarded *B*.

Here a problem arises for Rohrbaugh's individuality theory. If someone knows this story about *The Steerage*, they may well say that

(1) *The Steerage* could have been photograph *B*, rather than photograph *A*.⁹⁾

After all, the structural differences between *A* and *B* are slight, and Stieglitz may have changed his mind on selection. So (1) seems true. However, the individuality theory does not account for this modal flexibility. First, the modal flexibility in (1), which comes from Stieglitz's selection, does not involve (even counterfactually) any structural features of photograph *A*.¹⁰⁾ Remember Rohrbaugh thinks counterfactual intervention on structural features of photograph *A* accounts for the modal flexibility of

The Steerage. A cloud may have affected the structural features of photograph *A* as well as *The Steerage*, but Stieglitz's selection only affects the modal profiles of *The Steerage*, not of *A*'s structural features.

Second, the modal flexibility expressed in (1) is not that of a particular individual object, photograph *A*. For, if (1) is about photograph *A*, we should be able to substitute '*The Steerage*' with 'photograph *A*' in (1) *salva veritate*. That is, (2) should be true.

(2) Photograph *A* could have been photograph *B*, rather than photograph *A*.

But in Rohrbaugh's framework, (2) is not true, because photographs *A* and *B* are different individual photographs which have different material origins and causal histories. Therefore, the individuality theory does not account for the modal flexibility in (1).

It is helpful to make a terminological clarification, which also makes the source of Rohrbaugh's problem clear. As we have seen, one can discuss the modal flexibility of *The Steerage* in two ways. First, one can talk about the modal flexibility of *The Steerage* as an end-product of a causal process of putting film in a camera to development. In other words, *The Steerage* is a *photograph* in Rohrbaugh's sense. However, *The Steerage* is also an artwork which takes the form of a photograph, and one can talk about the modal flexibility of that artwork as in (1). Not all photographs are artworks (or not in all contexts). When my doctor shows me an X-ray print of my lungs, I do not see an artwork, although the print is an end-product of the same type of causal processes as photograph *A* is. So, that X-ray print is a photograph, but not an artwork. To reflect this distinction in our vocabulary, let us call the latter a *photographic artwork*: an artwork which takes the form of a photograph. Thus, *The Steerage* is a photographic artwork as well as a photograph, while the X-ray print of my lungs is a photograph, but not a photographic artwork. Now we can see that the modal flexibility Rohrbaugh considers is *primarily* that of a photograph, and the modal flexibility of a photographic artwork, *The Steerage*, is only *parasitic on* that of photograph *A*. This means two things: first, *The Steerage* could have been slightly more shaded, *because* photograph *A* could have been more shaded had counterfactual interventions to its causal history (such as clouds) occurred. Second, *The Steerage* could have been slightly more shaded *as long as*

photograph *A* could have been more shaded had those interventions occurred. However, if (1) is true, then interventions such as clouds would still have affected photograph *A*, even if photograph *A* were not selected by Stieglitz and thus were not *The Steerage*. In other words, that a property *F* counts as modal flexibility of *The Steerage* does not imply that *F* counts as modal flexibility of photograph *A*. In this sense, the modal flexibility Rohrbaugh considers primarily pertains to a photograph *A*, while the modal flexibility in our ‘selection story’ is about *The Steerage* as a photographic artwork.

One immediate consequence is, contrary to Rohrbaugh’s second point, that the modality at issue is *de dicto*, not *de re*. For the modal flexibility in (1) is not about a particular individual photograph (*A*), but *The Steerage* as a photographic artwork.¹¹ *The Steerage* is different individual photographs in different possible worlds and “*The Steerage*” refers to different individuals in different possible worlds. To see whether or not “*The Steerage* (as a photographic artwork) has such and such properties” is true, it is not enough to see modal profiles of what is *The Steerage* at the actual world, i.e., photograph *A*. Rather we are required to see what properties a thing has, which meets particular conditions (e.g., being selected by the photographer) in each possible world.

IV POSSIBLE OBJECTIONS AND REPLIES

In this section, I consider and reply to possible objections on behalf of the individuality theory.

IV.1 WHAT IF YOUR ‘SELECTION STORY’ IS WRONG?

One may object that if our story about Stieglitz’s selection turns out to be wrong, then (1) would be false, since there is no such thing as photograph *B*. And this is true not only of *The Steerage*. In fact, there are a number of situations in which a photographer does not or cannot take multiple (structurally similar) photographs: a photographer could not have had a chance to take multiple (structurally similar) pictures (this may often be the case in documentary photography); one may have been unable to afford to take multiple pictures, especially when cameras and other facilities were expensive. Therefore, a proposition corresponding to (1) may be false for many

photographic artworks.

But notice that this objection does not prevent us from asserting (1) (or a proposition corresponding to (1)), *if* selection did occur. And it is safe to say that selection does occur in the production of many, if not all, photographic artworks. Furthermore, selection may happen in other forms of art: suppose it turns out that Tolstoy made two slightly different manuscripts *A* and *B* for *Anna Karenina* and kept them until he finally decided to pick up *A* and bring it to the publisher. If this is true, we can assert a similar proposition as (1) for *Anna Karenina*:

(3) *Anna Karenina* could have been based on manuscript *B*, not *A*.

A more suitable form of art is pottery. When a potter makes her works, she rarely makes only one plate. It is more common that she makes multiple similar plates from clay and puts them into kiln. After glazing them, she may break some (or most) of her ‘work-candidates’ and select only some of them as her works. If this is true, then we can assert a proposition corresponding to (1) for a particular work of hers. Therefore, this objection is not generally successful.¹²⁾

IV.2 ARE PHOTOGRAPHS *A* AND *B* NOT DIFFERENT INDIVIDUAL ARTWORKS?

Another objection directly challenges (1). We made an assumption in (1) that photograph *B* is the *same* artwork *The Steerage* in a possible world ω , as is photograph *A* in the actual world. One may doubt this assumption. Let us call photograph *B* (as a photographic artwork) *The Schteerage*. According to this objection, Stieglitz selected photograph *B* in a world ω , but here he actually published *The Schteerage*, not *The Steerage*, even though he still calls it *The Steerage* there. In other words,

(4) Necessarily, if photograph *B* is an artwork, then *B* is *The Schteerage*

is true. Since the same thing is true of photograph *A*,

(5) Necessarily, if photograph *A* is an artwork, then *A* is *The Steerage*

is also true. Namely, (4) and (5) assert that a photograph and a photographic

artwork which is made of it has a *de re* modal relationship. Suppose there is a possible world where both photographs *A* and *B* are artworks and it is a truth of criticism that *The Steerage* and *The Schteerage* are not identical. From this and the necessity of identity, it is true that

(6) *The Steerage* and *The Schteerage* are not identical artworks.

Therefore, *The Steerage* could *not* have been photograph *B* —that is, (1) is false.

This reply already has some costs, because Rohrbaugh thinks art critics' talk would not make sense in many cases, if propositions regarding the modal flexibility of artworks are false.¹³⁾ Furthermore, this reply would impose the burden of having to explain why we can ignore the alleged modal flexibility expressed in (1), though we must take other alleged modal flexibilities seriously, such as the modal property of *could have been more shaded*.¹⁴⁾

Another problem is that this objection seems to ignore the possibility of different individuation of photographs (as artworks). Note that we can deduce this proposition from (4) to (6).

(7) Necessarily, if photographs *A* and *B* are artworks, then *A* and *B* are different artworks.

But (7) is not true, because there is no guarantee that an artist would always treat different photographs as different artworks, even when she regards them as artworks: Steiglitz may have seen *A* and *B* as *parts of one* artwork. Or more radically, he may have had a more coarse-grained individuation criterion and may have regarded *A* and *B* as two instantiations of *one and the same artwork*, even though he had regarded *X* and *Y* as different photographs. This point is particularly stark when we consider photographs which are not artworks yet. Suppose there is another X-ray photograph of my lungs. Let us call it *Y*. A proposition corresponding to (7) is:

(8) Necessarily, if *X* and *Y* are artworks, then *X* and *Y* are different artworks.

But (8) is not true either, because an artist may treat *X* and *Y* as parts or instances of *one* artwork.

One may wonder: what if we revise (5) and (6), so that photographs *A* and

B can be parts or instances of the same work (let us call it *The Steerage-X*)? Then, necessarily, if photograph A (B) is an artwork, then A (B) is *The Steerage* (*The Schteerage*) or *The Steerage-X*. But it is not very clear what motivation there is for accepting this.

IV.3 A PHOTOGRAPHIC ARTWORK AS A HIGHER INDIVIDUAL

The third possible response from the individuality theory to our “selection story” objection is the Higher Individuality Theory (HIT):

The Steerage is a higher individual than a photograph, and a photographic artwork has the same relations (such as ontological and property dependency) to a photograph as a photograph has to its embodiments.

But obviously they do not have exactly the same set of relations, because a photographic artwork takes different individual photographs in different worlds. And this is the problem for HIT: how do they cash out the idea that the same individual photographic artwork, *The Steerage*, is constituted by different individual photographs in different worlds?

It is true that the same individual can be constituted by different individuals in different worlds. Let us take a look at an individuality thesis from a different field: the philosophy of biology. As Rohrbaugh mentions,¹⁵⁾ the individuality thesis is one of the leading views on the ontology of biological species. So, for the sake of argument, let us assume that the individuality theory of biological species (such as *Homo sapiens*) is right, such that *Homo sapiens* is constituted by different individuals in different worlds. In a possible world ω there is a fertilization by a particular pair of sperm and egg, which did not meet in α , and a human being develops from that fertilization.

However, there is some constraint on which individuals the species *Homo sapiens* has in possible worlds. For instance, supporters of the individuality theory, such as Michael Ghiselin and David Hull, probably would not be happy to include a Martian population in *Homo sapiens* in a possible world where Martians are *phylogenetically disconnected from Earthlings*.¹⁶⁾ This is because they do not see the Martian population as *Homo sapiens* in this world for the same reason. To put it another way, according to individuality thesis, if the Martian population and ours did not share a causal history in a relevant way, they would not constitute *Homo sapiens* together.

If this analogy holds, different individual photographs in different worlds have to share the same relevant causal history with photograph *A* (which constitutes *The Steerage* in the actual world) there to constitute the same individual photographic artwork, just as Martians have to be phylogenetically connected to Earthlings to count as *Homo sapiens*. However, there is no guarantee that photographs *A* and *B* share any relevant causal history before the selection in that possible world: they may come from different films, they may be exposed in different cameras, or they may even be taken in different places. Therefore, photograph *B* may not have any relevant causal history in ω where *B* is selected by Stieglitz; *B* may not constitute *The Steerage* there. Hence, HIT fails to make (1) true.

One may object, however, that *after the selection* those photographs which constitute *The Steerage* in each possible world share the same event in their causal history: Stieglitz's selection. Both photograph *A* in α and photograph *B* in ω are selected by Stieglitz, just as a merely possible person constitutes *Homo sapiens* in ω because of his or her shared phylogeny. Thus, this idea can be formulated as follows:

(HIT*) photographs *A* in α and *B* in ω constitute the same individual *The Steerage*, because of their shared selection.

Notice that HIT* would concede one thing Rohrbaugh does not in his original account. In the original individuality theory, it is necessarily true that if a property *F* counts as modal flexibility of *The Steerage*, then *F* counts as modal flexibility of photograph *A*. However, this is not true any more, because in a possible world where Stieglitz picked up photograph *B* for *The Steerage*, some modal flexibility of *The Steerage* are those of photograph *B*, not *A* (thus modal flexibility of *The Steerage* is *de dicto* modality, unlike Rohrbaugh's account).

One challenge Rohrbaugh will face when he adopts HIT* is that an individual, as in HIT*, seems no different from what Rohrbaugh calls, *causal historical type*, which he denies solves the puzzle of modal flexibility. A causal-historical type has "identity conditions that make reference only to extrinsic, causal-historical features of the tokens."¹⁷ His primary example of the causal-historical type is *Harvard-graduate*: its tokens are graduates of Harvard University and they share a particular history, such as attending a class there. In the case of photography, causal-historical type

would be a type “whose identity conditions are given almost exclusively in terms of the shared history of prints, their coming from a particular picture-taking in an appropriate fashion.”¹⁸⁾ Thus, if one applies this to a photographic artwork, the causal-historical type theory regarding *The Steerage* would claim that

(CHT) *A* in α and *B* in ω are tokens of a historical type, *The Steerage*, because they share the particular selection.

Rohrbaugh denies the idea of causal-historical type as a solution to the ontology of art. Although Rohrbaugh admits that CHT may avoid his modal flexibility argument against the type theory,¹⁹⁾ he objects to the idea of causal-historical type, because “at best, [causal-historical types] merely simulate these phenomena” and those types themselves “are not subjects of change or modal potentiality.”²⁰⁾ Meanwhile he also denies that the Harvard-graduate is a historical individual.

Beyond statistical generalizations, the phrase ‘Harvard graduate’ plays no role as a locus for predication on a par with the rich talk and thought which surrounds works of art, ... nor is there space to regard ‘the Harvard graduate’ as *an historical individual* bearing both modal and temporal flexibility.”²¹⁾

Thus, for Rohrbaugh, Harvard-graduate is a historical type and no historical type is a subject of modal flexibility. Therefore, if he endorses HIT*, Rohrbaugh needs to discriminate HIT* from CHT. In other words, he needs to discriminate *The Steerage*, as in HIT*, from Harvard-graduate. This is no easy task, however. Harvard-graduate and *The Steerage* in HIT* have a quit similar ontological structure. Both of them are constituted by different individuals in different worlds, and owe their identity conditions to their shared history. And if he does not distinguish *The Steerage* (as a higher-level individual) and Harvard-graduate, he cannot endorse HIT*.

V CONCLUSION

Our ‘selection story’ offers a new challenge to the ontology of artworks. Although I have entirely focused on photography in this paper, I have suggested the kind of modal flexibility of *The Steerage* (as a photographic artwork) has its own place in other areas of art, such as pottery, literature

and music. As long as our intuition that *The Steerage* could have been photograph *B* is strong enough, any adequate ontology of artworks cannot afford to ignore this point. Although there are some options available, such as (at least one variant of) the higher individuality theory and the causal historical type theory, Rohrbaugh cannot take either position and thus his individuality theory does not make sense of the modality expressed in (1) in a proper way.²²⁾

* University of Pittsburgh, Center for Philosophy of Science. 817 Cathedral of Learning Pittsburgh, PA 15260 Email: yuiami@gmail.com

1) Guy Rohrbaugh, 'Artworks as Historical Individuals', *European Journal of Philosophy* 11(2), 177-205, 2003.

2) For example, see Richard Wollheim, *Art and Its Objects, 2nd Edition.*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980.

3) Jerrold Levinson, 'What a Musical Work Is,' *Journal of Philosophy*, 77(1): 5-28.

4) For example, Gregory Currie, *An Ontology of Art*, London: Macmillan, 1988.

5) Guy Rohrbaugh, *Artworks as Historical Individuals*, p.181.

6) Guy Rohrbaugh, "Ontology of Art," In: *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics 2nd Edition*, Berys Gaut and Dominic McIver Lopes (eds.), Routledge, 2005, p. 252.

7) Rohrbaugh also calls them, *what-the-photograph-is-like*, but this does not make a significant difference, except *what-the-photograph-is-like* is never an essential property of the photograph.

8) I do not claim anything about the actual history of *The Steerage*. It would be sufficient for my argument if there is selection in any of the cases in which a photograph is published as an artwork.

9) One point to note: "Been" in (1) does not express identity between photographs and *The Steerage*. For if (1) is about the identity, then (1) implies that it is possible that photograph *A* is identical with *B*. But this is not what I intend to say in (1). Instead, I am inclined to think that this "been" expresses something like *having a status as*. I cannot give any full account of *having a status as* here, but it helps to offer an example of it. One example I have in mind is *being a president*. George W. Bush is the 43rd U.S. president, but this "is" does not express identity; Bush and the 43rd president do not share all the modal profiles. It sounds more natural to take the sentence as meaning that G. W. Bush *has a status as* (or of) the 43rd U.S. president. By the same line of reasoning, we can take (1), not as an identity statement, but as a status statement. For example, "photograph *A* is *The Steerage*" means that photograph *A* has a status as *The Steerage*, and (1) means that *The Steerage* could have been had a status as by photograph *B*, rather than *A*. This does not exclude any view (other than the identity view) on the relation between

- photographs and *The Steerage* (e.g., the sortal relation). But it suffices for our current objective, because Rohrbaugh himself suggests he takes this status view (personal communication).
- 10) Here I assume that the causal histories of photograph *A* before the selection are the same in the actual world and a possible world where Stieglitz chose photograph *B*.
 - 11) Rohrbaugh might bite the bullet here: The proposition (1) is not either about photograph (*A*) or about *the Steerage* as a photographic artwork. In other words, he might take (1) as true but deny that the possibility expressed in (1) concerns the identity and ontological status of *The Steerage* —just as Kripke would dismiss a *de dicto* modal statement that Gödel necessarily proved the incompleteness theorem as irrelevant to the question concerning his identity. This is certainly among available options to Rohrbaugh, but he would still need to show that this move has philosophical merit of its own and is not just to allow him to eschew the problems caused by (1).
 - 12) Another argument against the objection is that even if the actual selection did not occur, selection *may* have occurred in the production of *any* artwork and then a proposition like (1) and (3) is true for *any* artwork. In other words, even if there was no photograph *B* and Stieglitz did not make a selection, there may have been photograph *B* and Stieglitz may have made the selection. Although a modal actualist may not find this scenario plausible because it assumes the existence of a merely possible object (photograph *B*), this is a strong argument against the objection if one is not.
 - 13) *Artworks as Historical Individuals*, p.183.
 - 14) We made a similar point in footnote 11.
 - 15) Rohrbaugh, *Artworks as Historical Individuals*, p. 204, n. 22.
 - 16) Richard Mayden, Hierarchy of Species Concepts: The Denouement in the Saga of the Species Problem, pp. 381-424. In: *Species: The Units of Biodiversity*. Claridge, M.F., Dawah, H.A. and Wilson, M.R. (eds). Chapman and Hall Ltd., London.
 - 17) Rohrbaugh, *Artworks as Historical Individuals*, p. 195.
 - 18) Rohrbaugh, *Artworks as Historical Individuals*, p. 196.
 - 19) *ibid.*
 - 20) *ibid.*
 - 21) *ibid.* Italics added.
 - 22) I am very grateful to Dominic McIver Lopes, Joshua Johnston, the late Brian Laetz, and Tetsuji Iseda for comments on earlier drafts. Guy Rohrbaugh's comments corrected my misunderstanding on his accounts and the topic. I could not have made improvements I did without their help. The writing of this paper was partially supported by research fellowship awarded to the author by the Center for Philosophy of Science, University of Pittsburgh.

Guoxi's ideal landscape which is very close to the concept of qixiang, even if not the very qixiang.

写真的芸術作品の様相フレキシビリティ

網谷 祐一

ピッツバーグ大学科学哲学センター（ポスト・ドクトラル・フェロー）
科学哲学

文学や音楽、写真のような芸術作品の存在論では、多くの哲学者がタイプ説と呼ばれる立場を支持してきた。タイプ説によれば、例えばアルフレッド・スティーグリッツの「三等船室」(The Steerage)のような芸術作品は個物 (individual) ではなくタイプであり、ネガから現像された一枚一枚の写真 (プリント) はその事例 (instance) である。そうした写真が他にもない「三等船室」の事例であるのは、それらが共通に持つ本質的性質 (例えば構図や色合い) のためである。

これに対し Guy Rohrbaugh は、タイプ説の問題点として様相フレキシビリティ (modal flexibility) に対応できないことを指摘し、個物説を提唱する。例えば「三等船室」が現実の作品とはやや異なる構図をもつ可能性があったことは真だと思われる。しかしこの作品が現にもつ構図を作品の本質的性質としてしまうと、それとは異なる構図をもつ写真はどの可能世界でもこの作品の事例とはなれない。しかし「三等船室」が個物であるとする、構図や色合いはこの作品の本質的性質とはならないため、様相フレキシビリティに対応することが容易になる。これはアル・ゴアのような個人が様相的性質の豊かなリストをもっている (例えば 2000 年の選挙で大統領に選ばれる可能性があった) のと同様である。

本論文では、こうした議論を認めた上で、個物説でも別種の様相フレキシビリティに対応することが困難なことを、特に写真を例にして論じる。この困難は Rohrbaugh が、写真家が作品を発表するときに自分のテーマをよりよく表現するような写真をいくつかの候補から選択することを見逃しているために生じる。これによりスティーグリッツが「三等船室」という同じ作品のために、異なる写真を充てた可能性が出てくる。こうした可能性は de dicto 様相の可能性であり、個物説が要請する de re 様相の可能性とは異なる。Rohrbaugh が支持するような個物説は、こうした de dicto 様相にある様相的性質が作品の個別化に関わることを説明できないのである。