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# Touch and the Experience of the Genuine

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## Abstract

Genuineness is an important property of objects that are rare, old, or preserved as memorials. Being genuine enhances economic value for objects such as works of art, and it is obviously critical for historical purposes, such as assessing the artefacts from a past culture. Here I argue that genuineness is also an aesthetic property that delivers an experience of its own. I contend that the sense of touch covertly operates in such experiences, as

this sense conveys the impression of being in contact with the 'real thing'. Touch seems to operate with a kind of transitivity that conducts the past into the present. However, the foundation for that impression may appear dubious, as it compares closely with what has been dubbed 'magical thinking'. Under these circumstances, is the aesthetic value accorded genuineness sensible or irrational? An apprehension of something real or a pleasant delusion? I defend the transitivity of touch by comparing it to similar phenomena already recognized in studies of perception and emotion.

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