

what we call the receptivity for an interest in contemplating nature) and sticks to the enjoyments of mere sense that he gets from meals or the bottle.

§ 43

On Art in General

(1) *Art* is distinguished from *nature* as doing (*facere*) is from acting or operating in general (*agere*); and the product or result of art is distinguished from that of nature, the first being a work (*opus*), the second an effect (*effectus*).

By right we should not call anything art except a production through freedom, i.e., through a power of choice that bases its acts on reason. For though we like to call the product that bees make (the regularly constructed honeycombs) a work of art, we do so only by virtue of an analogy with art; for as soon as we recall that their labor is not based on any rational deliberation on their part, we say at once that the product is a product of their nature (namely, of instinct), and it is only to their creator that we ascribe it as art.

[It is true that] if, as sometimes happens when we search through a bog, we come across a piece of hewn wood, we say that it is a product of art, rather than of nature, i.e., that the cause which produced it was thinking of a purpose to which this object owes its form. Elsewhere too, I suppose, we see art in everything that is of such a character that before it became actual its cause must have had a presentation of it (as even in the case of bees), yet precisely without the cause's having [in fact] *thought* of that effect. But if we simply call something a work of art in order to distinguish it from a natural effect, then we always mean by that a work of man.

(2) *Art*, as human skill, is also distinguished from *science* (i.e., we distinguish] *can* from *know*), as practical from theoretical ability, as technic from theory (e.g., the art of surveying from geometry). That is exactly why we refrain from calling anything art that we *can* do the moment we *know* what is to be done, i.e., the moment we are

sufficiently acquainted with what the desired effect is. Only if something [is such that] even the most thorough acquaintance with it does not immediately provide us with the skill to make it, then to that extent it belongs to art. *Camper*³⁴ describes with great precision what the best shoe would have to be like, yet he was certainly unable to make one.³⁵

(3) *Art* is likewise distinguished from *craft*. The first is also called *free art*, the second could also be called *mercenary art*. We regard free art [as an art] that could only turn out purposive (i.e., succeed) if it is play, in other words, an occupation that is agreeable on its own account; mercenary art we regard as labor, i.e., as an occupation that on its own account is disagreeable (burdensome) and that attracts us only through its effect (e.g., pay), so that people can be coerced into it. To judge whether, in a ranking of the guilds, watchmakers should be counted as artists but smiths as craftsmen, we would have to take a viewpoint different from the one adopted here: we would have to compare [*Proportion*] the talents that each of these occupations presupposes. Whether even among the so-called seven free arts a few may not have been included that should be numbered with the sciences, as well as some that are comparable to crafts, I do not here wish to discuss. It is advisable, however, to remind ourselves that in all the free arts there is yet a need for something in the order of a constraint, or, as it is called, a *mechanism*. (In poetry, for example, it is correctness and richness of language, as well as prosody and meter.) Without this the *spirit*,³⁶ which in art must be *free* and which alone animates the work, would have no body at all and would evaporate completely. This reminder is needed because some of the more recent educators believe that they promote a free art best if they remove all constraint from it and convert it from labor into mere play.

³⁴Peter Camper (1722-89), Dutch anatomist and naturalist. He is the author of numerous works, the most important of which are on comparative anatomy.]

³⁵In my part of the country, if you confront the common man with a problem like that of Columbus and his egg, he will say: *That is not an art, it is only a science*. That is, if you know it *then you can do it*; and he says just the same about all the alleged arts of the conjurer. That of the tightrope dancer, on the other hand, he will not at all decline to call art.

³⁶[*Geist*; cf. § 49, Ak. 313.]

On Fine Art

There is no science of the beautiful [*das Schöne*], but only critique; and there is no fine [*schön*] science,³⁷ but only fine art. For in a science of the beautiful, whether or not something should be considered beautiful would have to be decided scientifically, i.e., through bases of proof, so that if a judgment about beauty belonged to science then it would not be a judgment of taste. As for a fine science: a science that as a science is to be fine is an absurdity; for if, [treating it] as a science, we asked for reasons and proofs, we would be put off with tasteful phrases (*bons mots*). What has given rise to the familiar expression, *fine sciences*, is doubtless nothing more than the realization, which is quite correct, that fine art in its full perfection requires much science: e.g., we must know ancient languages, we must have read the authors considered classical, we must know history and be familiar with the antiquities, etc.; and this is why these historical sciences have, through a confusion of words, themselves come to be called fine sciences, because they constitute the foundation and preparation needed for fine art, and in part also because they have come to include even a familiarity with the products of fine art (as in oratory or poetry).

If art merely performs the acts that are required to make a possible object actual, adequately to our *cognition* of that object, then it is *mechanical-art*; but if what it intends directly is [to arouse] the feeling of pleasure, then it is called *aesthetic art*. The latter is either *agreeable* or *fine art*. It is agreeable art if its purpose is that the pleasure should accompany presentations that are mere *sensations*; it is fine art if its purpose is that the pleasure should accompany presentations that are *ways of cognizing*.

Agreeable arts are those whose purpose is merely enjoyment. They include [the art of providing] all those charms that can gratify a party at table, such as telling stories entertainingly, animating the group to open and lively conversation, or using jest and laughter to induce a

³⁷[Or "beautiful" science: Kant is responding, above all, to Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten and Georg Friedrich Meier. Cf. the Translator's Introduction, *t.ii.*]

certain cheerful tone among them³⁸—a tone such that, as is said, there may be a lot of loose talk over the feast, and no one wants to be held responsible for what he says, because the whole point is the entertainment of the moment, not any material for future meditation or quotation. (Such arts also include the art of furnishing a table so that people will enjoy themselves, or include, at large banquets, presumably even the table-music—a strange thing which is meant to be only an agreeable noise serving to keep the minds in a cheerful mood, and which fosters the free flow of conversation between each person and his neighbor, without anyone's paying the slightest attention to the music's composition.) Also included in these arts are any games that involve no further interest than that of making time go by unnoticed.

Fine art, on the other hand, is a way of presenting that is purposive on its own and that furthers, even though without a purpose, the culture of our mental powers to [facilitate] social communication.

The very concept of the universal communicability of a pleasure carries with it [the requirement] that this pleasure must be a pleasure of reflection rather than one of enjoyment arising from mere sensation. Hence aesthetic art that is also fine art is one whose standard is the reflective power of judgment, rather than sensation proper.³⁹

§ 45

Fine Art Is an Art Insofar as It Seems at the Same Time to Be Nature

In [dealing with] a product of fine art we must become conscious that it is art rather than nature, and yet the purposiveness in its form must seem as free from all constraint of chosen rules as if it were a product of mere nature. It is this feeling of freedom in the play of our

³⁸[Cf. the *Anthropology*, Ak. VII, 280.]

³⁹[*Sinnesempfindung*; see § 39, Ak. 291 incl. br. n. 19.]

cognitive powers, a play that yet must also be purposive, which underlies that pleasure which alone is universally communicable although not based on concepts. Nature, we say, is beautiful [*schön*] if it also looks like art; and art can be called fine [*schön*] art only if we are conscious that it is art while yet it looks to us like nature.

For we may say universally, whether it concerns beauty in nature or in art: *beautiful is what we like in merely judging it* (rather than either in sensation proper or through a concept). Now art always has a determinate intention to produce something. But if this something were mere sensation (something merely subjective), to be accompanied by pleasure, then we would [indeed] like this product in judging it, [but] only by means of the feeling of sense. If the intention were directed at producing a determinate object and were achieved by the art, then we would like the object only through concepts. In neither case, then, would we like the art in *merely judging it*, i.e., we would like it not as fine but only as mechanical art.

Therefore, even though the purposiveness in a product of fine art is intentional, it must still not seem intentional; i.e., fine art must have the look of nature even though we are conscious of it as art. And a product of art appears like nature if, though we find it to agree quite *punctiliously* with the rules that have to be followed for the product to become what it is intended to be, it does not do so *painstakingly*. In other words, the academic form must not show; there must be no hint that the rule was hovering before the artist's eyes and putting fetters on his mental powers.

§ 46

Fine Art Is the Art of Genius

Genius is the talent (natural endowment) that gives the rule to art. Since talent is an innate productive ability of the artist and as such belongs itself to nature, we could also put it this way: *Genius* is the innate mental predisposition (*ingenium*) through which nature gives the rule to art.

Whatever the status of this definition may be, and whether or not it is merely arbitrary, or rather adequate to the concept that we usually connect with the word *genius* (these questions will be discussed in the following section), still we can prove even now that, in terms of the meaning of the word *genius* adopted here, fine arts must necessarily be considered arts of *genius*.

For every art presupposes rules, which serve as the foundation on which a product, if it is to be called artistic, is thought of as possible in the first place. On the other hand, the concept of fine art does not permit a judgment about the beauty of its product to be derived from any rule whatsoever that has a *concept* as its determining basis, i.e., the judgment must not be based on a concept of the way in which the product is possible. Hence fine art cannot itself devise the rule by which it is to bring about its product. Since, however, a product can never be called art unless it is preceded by a rule, it must be nature in the subject (and through the attainment of his powers) that gives the rule to art; in other words, fine art is possible only as the product of *genius*.

What this shows is the following: (1) *Genius* is a *talent* for producing something for which no determinate rule can be given, not a predisposition consisting of a skill for something that can be learned by following some rule or other; hence the foremost property of *genius* must be *originality*. (2) Since nonsense too can be original, the products of *genius* must also be models, i.e., they must be *exemplary*; hence, though they do not themselves arise through imitation, still they must serve others for this, i.e., as a standard or rule by which to judge. (3) *Genius* itself cannot describe or indicate scientifically how it brings about its products, and it is rather as *nature* that it gives the rule. That is why, if an author owes a product to his *genius*, he himself does not know how he came by the ideas for it; nor is it in his power [*Gewalt*] to devise such products at his pleasure, or by following a plan, and to communicate [his procedure] to others in precepts that would enable them to bring about like products. (Indeed, that is presumably why the word *genius* is derived from [Latin] *genius*, [which means] the guardian and guiding spirit that each person is given as his own at birth,⁴⁰ and to whose inspiration [*Eingebung*] those original ideas are due.) (4) Nature, through *genius*, prescribes

⁴⁰[Cf. the *Anthropology*, Ak. VII, 225.]

the rule not to science but to art, and this also only insofar as the art is to be fine art.

§ 47

Elucidation and Confirmation of the Above Explication of Genius

On this point everyone agrees: that genius must be considered the very opposite of a *spirit of imitation*. Now since learning is nothing but imitation, even the greatest competence, [i.e.,] teachability (capacity) *qua* teachability, can still not count as genius. But even if someone does not just take in what others have thought but thinks and writes on his own, or even makes all sorts of discoveries in art and science, still, even that is not yet the right basis for calling such a *mind* (in contrast to one who is called a *simpleton*, because he can never do more than just learn and imitate) a *genius* (great though such a mind often is). For all of this *could* in fact have been done through learning as well, and hence lies in the natural path of an investigation and meditation by rules and does not differ in kind from what a diligent person can acquire by means of imitation. Thus one can indeed learn everything that *Newton* has set forth in his immortal work on the principles of natural philosophy, however great a mind was needed to make such discoveries; but one cannot learn to write inspired⁴¹ poetry, however elaborate all the precepts of this art may be, and however superb its models. The reason for this is that *Newton* could show how he took every one of the steps he had to take in order to get from the first elements of geometry to his great and profound discoveries; he could show this not only to himself but to everyone else as well, in an intuitive [ly clear] way, allowing others to follow. But

⁴¹[*Geistreich*: 'rich in spirit,' literally.]

no *Homer* or *Wieland*⁴² can show how his ideas, rich in fancy and yet also in thought, arise and meet in his mind; the reason is that he himself does not know, and hence also cannot teach it to anyone else. In scientific matters, therefore, the greatest discoverer differs from the most arduous imitator and apprentice only in degree, whereas he differs in kind from someone whom nature has endowed for fine art. But saying this does not disparage those great men, to whom the human race owes so much, in contrast to those whom nature has favored with a talent for fine art. For the scientists' talent lies in continuing to increase the perfection of our cognitions and of all the benefits that depend on [these], as well as in imparting that same knowledge to others; and in these respects they are far superior to those who merit the honor of being called geniuses. For the latter's art stops at some point, because a boundary is set for it beyond which it cannot go and which probably has long since been reached and cannot be extended further. Moreover, the artist's skill cannot be communicated but must be conferred directly on each person by the hand of nature. And so it dies with him, until some day nature again endows someone else in the same way, someone who needs nothing but an example in order to put the talent of which he is conscious to work in a similar way.

Since, then, [the artist's] natural endowment must give the rule to (fine) art, what kind of rule is this? It cannot be couched in a formula and serve as a precept, for then a judgment about the beautiful could be determined according to concepts. Rather, the rule must be abstracted from what the artist has done, i.e., from the product, which others may use to test their own talent, letting it serve them as their model, not to be copied [Nachmachung] but to be imitated [Nachahmung].⁴³ How that is possible is difficult to explain. The artist's ideas arouse similar ideas in his apprentice if nature has provided the latter with a similar proportion in his mental powers. That is why the models of fine art are the only means of transmitting

⁴²Christoph Martin Wieland (1733-1813), German poet and man of letters.]

⁴³[Karl Vorländer, editor of the *Critique of Judgment* in the *Philosophische Bibliothek* edition, notes (v. 39a, 163, n. b) that Kant's manuscript read 'Nachahmung. . . Nachahmung' ('[not to be] imitated [but to be] imitated'), which was then 'corrected' to the reading found here, but that Kant presumably meant to write 'Nachahmung. . . Nachfolge' ('[not to be] imitated [but to be] followed'), in line with what he says elsewhere: see esp. Ak. 318 and 283.]

these ideas to posterity. Mere descriptions could not accomplish this (especially not in the area of the arts of speech), and even in these arts only those models can become classical which are written in the ancient, dead languages, now preserved only as scholarly languages.⁴⁴

Even though mechanical and fine art are very different from each other, since the first is based merely on diligence and learning but the second on genius, yet there is no fine art that does not have as its essential condition something mechanical, which can be encompassed by rules and complied with, and hence has an element of *academic correctness*. For something must be thought, as purpose, since otherwise the product cannot be ascribed to any art at all, but would be a mere product of chance. But directing the work to a purpose requires determinate rules that one is not permitted to renounce. Now since originality of talent is one essential component (though not the only one) of the character of genius, shallow minds believe that the best way to show that they are geniuses in first bloom is by renouncing all rules of academic constraint, believing that they will cut a better figure on the back of an ill-tempered than of a training-horse. Genius can only provide rich *material* for products of fine art; processing this material and giving it *form* requires a talent that is academically trained, so that it may be used in a way that can stand the test of the power of judgment. But it is utterly ridiculous for someone to speak and decide like a genius even in matters that require the most careful rational investigation. One does not quite know whether to laugh harder at the charlatan who spreads all this haze, in which we can judge nothing distinctly but can imagine all the more, or rather laugh at the audience, which naively imagines that the reason why it cannot distinctly recognize and grasp this masterpiece of insight is that large masses of new truths are being hurled at it, whereas it regards the detail (which is based on carefully weighed explications and academically correct examination of the principles) as only the work of a bungler.

⁴⁴[Cf. Ak. 232 n. 49.]

§ 48

On the Relation of Genius to Taste

Judging beautiful objects to be such requires taste; but fine art itself, i.e., production-of-such-objects, requires genius.

If we consider genius as the talent for fine art (and the proper meaning of the word implies this) and from this point of view wish to analyze it into the powers that must be combined in order to constitute such a talent, then we must begin by determining precisely how natural beauty, the judging of which requires only taste, differs from artistic beauty, whose possibility (which we must also bear in mind when we judge an object of this sort) requires genius.

A natural beauty is a *beautiful thing*; artistic beauty is a *beautiful presentation* of a thing.

In order to judge a natural beauty to be that, I need not have a prior concept of what kind of thing the object is [meant] to be; i.e., I do not have to know its material purposiveness (its purpose). Rather, I like the mere form of the object when I judge it, on its own account and without knowing the purpose. But if the object is given as a product of art, and as such is to be declared beautiful, then we must first base it on a concept of what the thing is [meant] to be, since art always presupposes a purpose in the cause (and its causality). And since the harmony of a thing's manifold with an intrinsic determination of the thing, i.e., with its purpose, is the thing's perfection, it follows that when we judge artistic beauty we shall have to assess the thing's perfection as well, whereas perfection is not at all at issue when we judge natural beauty (to be that). It is true that when we judge certain objects of nature, above all animate ones, such as a human being or a horse, we do commonly also take into account their objective purposiveness in order to judge their beauty. But then, by the same token, the judgment is no longer purely aesthetic, no longer a mere judgment of taste. We then judge nature no longer as it appears as art, but insofar as it actually is art (though superhuman art), and [so we make a] teleological judgment that serves the aesthetic one as a foundation and condition that it must take into

account. Thus if we say, e.g., That is a beautiful woman, we do in fact think nothing other than that nature offers us in the woman's figure a beautiful presentation of the purposes [inherent] in the female build. For in order to think the object in this way, through a logically conditioned aesthetic judgment, we have to look beyond the mere form and toward a concept.

Fine art shows its superiority precisely in this, that it describes things beautifully that in nature we would dislike or find ugly.⁴⁵ The Furies, diseases, devastations of war, and so on are all harmful; and yet they can be described, or even presented in a painting, very beautifully. There is only one kind of ugliness that cannot be presented in conformity with nature without obliterating all aesthetic liking and hence artistic beauty: that ugliness which arouses *disgust*. For in that strange sensation, which rests on nothing but imagination, the object is presented as if it insisted, as it were, on our enjoying it even though that is just what we are forcefully resisting; and hence the artistic presentation of the object is no longer distinguished in our sensation from the nature of this object itself, so that it cannot possibly be considered beautiful. The art of sculpture, too, has excluded from its creations any direct presentation of ugly objects, since in its products art is almost confused with nature. Instead it has permitted [ugly objects] to be presented by an allegory—e.g., death ([by] a beautiful genius) or a warlike spirit ([by] Mars)—or by attributes that come across as likable, and hence has permitted them only to be presented indirectly and by means of an interpretation of reason rather than presented for a merely aesthetic power of judgment.

Let this suffice for the beautiful presentation of an object, which is actually only the form of a concept's exhibition, the form by which this concept is universally communicated. Now, giving this form to a product of fine art requires merely taste. The artist, having practiced and corrected his taste by a variety of examples from art or nature, holds his work up to it, and, after many and often laborious attempts to satisfy his taste, finds that form which is adequate to it. Hence this form is not, as it were, a matter of inspiration or of a free momentum of the mental powers; the artist is, instead, slowly and rather painstakingly touching the form up in an attempt to make it adequate to his

⁴⁵[Cf. Aristotle, the *Poetics*, ch. iv, 1448b, and Edmund Burke, *Enquiry Into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, Pt. I, Section xvi.]

thought while yet keeping it from interfering with the freedom in the play of these powers.

But taste is merely an ability to judge, not to produce; and if something conforms to it, that [fact] does not yet make the thing a work of fine art: it may belong to useful and mechanical art, or even to science, as a product made according to determinate rules that can be learned and that must be complied with precisely. If this product has been given a likable form, then this form is only the vehicle of communication, and, as it were, a manner [adopted] in displaying the product, so that one still retains a certain measure of freedom in this display even though it is otherwise tied to a determinate purpose. Thus we demand that tableware, or, for that matter, a moral treatise, or even a sermon should have this form of fine art, yet without its seeming *studied*, but we do not on that account call these things works of fine art. In fine art we include, rather, a poem, a piece of music, a gallery of pictures, and so on; and here we often find a would-be work of fine art that manifests genius without taste, or another that manifests taste without genius.

§ 49

On the Powers of the Mind Which Constitute Genius

Of certain products that are expected to reveal themselves at least in part to be fine art, we say that they have no *spirit*, even though we find nothing to censure in them as far as taste is concerned. A poem may be quite nice and elegant and yet have no spirit. A story may be precise and orderly and yet have no spirit. An oration may be both thorough and graceful and yet have no spirit. Many conversations are entertaining, but they have no spirit. Even about some woman we will say that she is pretty, communicative, and polite, but that she has no spirit. Well, what do we mean here by spirit?

Spirit [*Geist*] in an aesthetic sense is the animating principle in the

mind.⁴⁶ But what this principle uses to animate [or quicken] the soul, the material it employs for this, is what imparts to the mental power a purposive momentum, i.e., imparts to them a play which is such that it sustains itself on its own and even strengthens the powers for such play.

Now I maintain that this principle is nothing but the ability to exhibit *aesthetic-ideas*: and by an aesthetic idea I mean a presentation of the imagination which prompts much thought, but to which no determinate thought whatsoever, i.e., no [determinate] concept, can be adequate, so that no language can express it completely and allow us to grasp it.⁴⁷ It is easy to see that an aesthetic idea is the counterpart (pendant) of a *rational idea*, which is, conversely, a concept to which no *intuition* (presentation of the imagination) can be adequate.

For the imagination ([in its role] as a productive cognitive power) is very mighty when it creates,⁴⁸ as it were, another nature out of the material that actual nature gives it. We use it to entertain ourselves when experience strikes us as overly routine. We may even restrict our experience; and though in doing so we continue to follow analogical laws, yet we also follow principles which reside higher up, namely, in reason (and which are just as natural to us as those which the understanding follows in apprehending empirical nature). In this process we feel our freedom from the law of association (which attaches to the empirical use of the imagination); for although it is under that law that nature lends us material, yet we can process that material into something quite different, namely, into something that surpasses nature.

Such presentations of the imagination we may call *ideas*. One reason for this is that they do at least strive toward something that lies beyond the bounds of experience, and hence try to approach an exhibition of rational concepts (intellectual ideas), and thus [these concepts] are given a semblance of objective reality. Another reason, indeed the main reason, for calling those presentations ideas is that they are inner intuitions to which no concept can be completely

⁴⁶[Cf. the *Anthropology*, Ak. VII, 225 and 246. Cf. also above, § 46, Ak. 308.]

⁴⁷[Cf. § 57, Comment I, Ak. 341-44.]

⁴⁸[On the "productive" imagination, see Ak. 240 br. n. 66; and cf. Ak. 243 br. n. 73, where Kant tells us in what sense the imagination is *not* creative.]

adequate. A poet ventures to give sensible expression to rational ideas of invisible beings, the realm of the blessed, the realm of hell, eternity, creation, and so on. Or, again, he takes [things] that are indeed exemplified in experience, such as death, envy, and all the other vices, as well as love, fame, and so on; but then, by means of an imagination that emulates the example of reason in reaching [for] a maximum, he ventures to give these sensible expression in a way that goes beyond the limits of experience, namely, with a completeness for which no example can be found in nature. And it is actually in the art of poetry that the power [i.e., faculty] of aesthetic ideas can manifest itself to full extent. Considered by itself, however, this power is actually only a talent (of the imagination).

Now if a concept is provided with [*unterlegen*] a presentation of the imagination such that, even though this presentation belongs to the exhibition of the concept, yet it prompts, even by itself, so much thought as can never be comprehended within a determinate concept and thereby the presentation aesthetically expands the concept itself in an unlimited way, then the imagination is creative in [all of] this and sets the power of intellectual ideas (i.e., reason) in motion: it makes reason think more, when prompted by a [certain] presentation, than what can be apprehended and made distinct in the presentation (though the thought does pertain to the concept of the object [presented]).

If forms do not constitute the exhibition of a given concept itself, but are only supplementary [*Neben-*] presentations of the imagination, expressing the concept's implications and its kinship with other concepts, then they are called (aesthetic) *attributes* of an object, of an object whose concept is a rational idea and hence cannot be exhibited adequately. Thus Jupiter's eagle with the lightning in its claws is an attribute of the mighty king of heaven, and the peacock is an attribute of heaven's stately queen. [Through] these attributes, unlike [through] *logical attributes*, [we] do not present the content of our concepts of the sublimity and majesty of creation, but present something different, something that prompts the imagination to spread over a multitude of kindred presentations that arouse more thought than can be expressed in a concept determined by words. These aesthetic attributes yield an *aesthetic idea*, which serves the mentioned rational idea as a substitute for a logical exhibition, but its proper function is to quicken [*beleben*] the mind by opening up for it a view

into an immense realm of kindred presentations. Fine art does this not only in painting or sculpture (where we usually speak of attributes); but poetry and oratory also take the spirit that animates [*beleben*] their works solely from the aesthetic attributes of the objects, attributes that accompany the logical ones and that give the imagination a momentum which makes it think more in response to these objects [*dabei*], though in an undeveloped way, than can be comprehended within one concept and hence in one determinate linguistic expression. Here are some examples, though for the sake of brevity I must confine myself to only a few.

The great king, in one of his poems, expresses himself thus:

Let us part from life without grumbling or regrets,
Leaving the world behind filled with our good deeds.
Thus the sun, his daily course completed,
Spreads one more soft light over the sky;
And the last rays that he sends through the air
Are the last sighs he gives the world for its well-being.⁴⁹

The king is here animating his rational idea of a cosmopolitan attitude, even at the end of life, by means of an attribute which the imagination (in remembering all the pleasures of a completed beautiful summer day, which a serene evening calls to mind) conjoins with that presentation, and which arouses a multitude of sensations and supplementary presentations for which no expression can be found. On the other hand, even an intellectual concept may serve, conversely, as an attribute of a presentation of sense and thus animate that presentation by the idea of the supersensible; but [we] may use for this only the aesthetic [element] that attaches subjectively to our consciousness of the supersensible. Thus, for example, a certain poet, in describing a beautiful morning, says: "The sun flowed forth, as seren-

⁴⁹[Kant is giving a German translation (probably his own) of the following lines written in French by Frederick the Great (*Oeuvres de Frédéric le Grand*, 1846 ff., x, 203):

*Oui, finissons sans trouble, et mourons sans regrets,
En laissant l'Univers comblé de nos bienfaits.
Ainsi l'Astre du jour, au bout de sa carrière,
Répand sur l'horizon une douce lumière,
Et les derniers rayons qu'il darde dans les airs
Sont ses derniers soupirs qu'il donne à l'Univers.]*

ity flows from virtue."⁵⁰ The consciousness of virtue, even if we only think of ourselves as in the position of a virtuous person, spreads in the mind a multitude of sublime and calming feelings and a boundless outlook toward a joyful future, such as no expression commensurate with a determinate concept completely attains.⁵¹

In a word, an aesthetic idea is a presentation of the imagination which is conjoined with a given concept and is connected, when we use imagination in its freedom, with such a multiplicity of partial presentations that no expression that stands for a determinate concept can be found for it. Hence it is a presentation that makes us add to a concept the thoughts of much that is ineffable, but the feeling of which quickens our cognitive powers and connects language, which otherwise would be mere letters, with spirit.

So the mental powers whose combination (in a certain relation) constitutes *genius* are imagination and understanding. One qualification is needed, however. When the imagination is used for cognition, then it is under the constraint of the understanding and is subject to the restriction of adequacy to the understanding's concept. But when the aim is aesthetic, then the imagination is free, so that, over and above that harmony with the concept, it may supply, in an unstudied way, a wealth of undeveloped material for the understanding which the latter disregards in its concept. But the understanding employs this material not so much objectively, for cognition, as subjectively, namely, to quicken the cognitive powers, though indirectly this does serve cognition too. Hence genius actually consists in the happy relation—one that no science can teach and that cannot be learned by any diligence—allowing us, first, to discover ideas for a given

⁵⁰From *Akademische Gedichte (Academic Poems)* (1782), vol. i, p. 70, by J. Ph. L. Withof (1725-89), professor of morals, oratory, and medicine at Duisburg, Germany. The original poem had 'goodness' instead of 'virtue'.]

⁵¹Perhaps nothing more sublime has ever been said, or a thought ever been expressed more sublimely, than in that inscription above the temple of *Isis* (Mother Nature): "I am all that is, that was, and that will be, and no mortal has lifted my veil." *Segner*⁵² made use of this idea in an ingenious vignette prefixed to his *Naturlehre (Natural Science)*, so as first to imbue the pupil, whom he was about to lead into this temple, with the sacred thrill that is meant to attune the mind to solemn attentiveness.

⁵²[Johann Andreas von Segner (1704-77), German physicist and mathematician at Jena, Göttingen, and Halle. He is the author of several significant scientific works. He introduced the concept of the surface tension of liquids.]

concept, and, second, to hit upon a way of *expressing* these ideas that enables us to communicate to others, as accompanying a concept, the mental attainment that these ideas produce. The second talent is properly the one we call spirit. For in order to express what is ineffable in the mental state accompanying a certain presentation and to make it universally communicable—whether the expression consists in language or painting or plastic art—we need an ability [viz., spirit] to apprehend the imagination's rapidly passing play and to unite it in a concept that can be communicated without the constraint of rules (a concept that on that very account is original, while at the same time it reveals a new rule that could not have been inferred from any earlier principles or examples).

If, after this analysis, we look back to the above explication of what we call *genius*, we find: *First*, genius is a talent for art, not for science, where we must start from distinctly known rules that determine the procedure we must use in it. *Second*, since it is an artistic talent, it presupposes a determinate concept of the product, namely, its purpose; hence genius presupposes understanding, but also a presentation (though an indeterminate one) of the material, i.e., of the intuition, needed to exhibit this concept, and hence presupposes a relation of imagination to understanding. *Third*, it manifests itself not so much in the fact that the proposed purpose is achieved in exhibiting a determinate concept, as, rather, in the way *aesthetic ideas*, which contain a wealth of material [suitable] for that intention, are offered or expressed; and hence it presents the imagination in its freedom from any instruction by rules, but still as purposive for exhibiting the given concept. Finally, *fourth*, the unstudied, unintentional subjective purposiveness in the imagination's free harmony with the understanding's lawfulness presupposes such a proportion and attunement of these powers as cannot be brought about by any compliance with rules, whether of science or of mechanical imitation; but can be brought about only by the subject's nature.

These presuppositions being given, genius is the exemplary originality of a subject's natural endowment in the *free* use of his cognitive powers. Accordingly, the product of a genius (as regards what is attributable to genius in it rather than to possible learning or academic instruction) is an example that is meant not to be imitated, but

to be followed by another genius. (For in mere imitation the element of genius in the work—what constitutes its spirit—would be lost.) The other genius, who follows the example, is aroused by it to a feeling of his own originality, which allows him to exercise in art his freedom from the constraint of rules, and to do so in such a way that art itself acquires a new rule by this, thus showing that the talent is exemplary. But since a genius is nature's favorite and so must be regarded as a rare phenomenon, his example gives rise to a school for other good minds, i.e., a methodical instruction by means of whatever rules could be extracted from those products of spirit and their peculiarity; and for these [followers] fine art is to that extent imitation, for which nature, through a genius, gave the rule.

But this imitation becomes *aping* if the pupil *copies* everything, including even the deformities that the genius had to permit only because it would have been difficult to eliminate them without diminishing the force of the idea. This courage [to retain deformities] has merit only in a genius. A certain *boldness* of expression, and in general some deviation from the common rule, is entirely fitting for a genius; it is however not at all worthy of imitation, but in itself always remains a defect that [any] one must try to eliminate, though the genius has, as it were, a privilege to allow the defect to remain [anyway], because the inimitable [element] in the momentum of his spirit would be impaired by timorous caution. *Mannerism* is a different kind of aping; it consists in aping mere *peculiarity* (originality) as such, so as to distance oneself as far as at all possible from imitators, yet without possessing the talent needed to be *exemplary* as well. It is true that we use the term *manner*⁵³ in another way as well: Whenever we convey our thoughts, there are two ways (*modi*) of arranging them, and one of these is called *manner* (*modus aestheticus*), the other *method* (*modus logicus*);⁵⁴ the difference between these two is that the first has no standard other than the *feeling* that there is unity in the exhibition [of the thoughts], whereas the second follows in [all of] this determinate *principles*; hence only the first applies to fine art. But in art a product is called *mannered* only if the way the artist conveys his idea *aims* at singularity and is not adequate to the idea. Whatever is ostentatious (precious), stilted, and affected, with the

⁵³[Emphasis added.]

⁵⁴[Cf. Ak. 355 br. n. 41.]

sole aim of differing from the ordinary (but without spirit), resembles the behavior of those who, as we say, listen to themselves talking, or who stand and walk as if they were on a stage so as to be gaped at, behavior that always betrays a bungler.

§ 50

On the Combination of Taste with Genius in Products of Fine Art

If we ask which is more important in objects [*Sachen*] of fine art, whether they show genius or taste, then this is equivalent to asking whether in fine art imagination is more important than judgment. Now insofar as art shows genius it does indeed deserve to be called *inspired* [*geistreich*], but it deserves to be called *fine* art only insofar as it shows taste. Hence what we must look to above all, when we judge art as fine art, is taste, at least as an indispensable condition (*conditio sine qua non*). In order [for a work] to be beautiful, it is not strictly necessary that [it] be rich and original in ideas, but it is necessary that the imagination in its freedom be commensurate with the lawfulness of the understanding. For if the imagination is left in lawless freedom, all its riches [in ideas] produce nothing but nonsense, and it is judgment that adapts the imagination to the understanding.

Taste, like the power of judgment in general, consists in disciplining (or training) genius. It severely clips its wings, and makes it civilized, or polished; but at the same time it gives it guidance as to how far and over what it may spread while still remaining purposive. It introduces clarity and order into a wealth of thought, and hence makes the ideas durable, fit for approval that is both lasting and universal, and [hence] fit for being followed by others and fit for an ever-advancing culture. Therefore, if there is a conflict between these two properties in a product, and something has to be sacrificed, then it should rather be on the side of genius; and

judgment, which in matters [*Sachen*] of fine art bases its pronouncements on principles of its own, will sooner permit the imagination's freedom and wealth to be impaired than that the understanding be impaired.

Hence fine art would seem to require *imagination, understanding, spirit, and taste*.⁵⁵

§ 51

On the Division of the Fine Arts

We may in general call beauty (whether natural or artistic) the *expression* of aesthetic ideas; the difference is that in the case of beautiful [*schön*] art the aesthetic idea must be prompted by a concept of the object, whereas in the case of beautiful nature, mere reflection on a given intuition, without a concept of what the object is [meant] to be, is sufficient for arousing and communicating the idea of which that object is regarded as the *expression*.

Accordingly, if we wish to divide the fine [*schön*] arts, we can choose for this, at least tentatively, no more convenient principle than the analogy between the arts and the way people express themselves in speech, so as to communicate with one another as perfectly as possible, namely, not merely as regards their concepts but also as

⁵⁵The first three abilities are first united by the fourth. *Hume*, in his history⁵⁶ informs the English that, although they are in their works second to no other people in the world as regards evidence of the first three properties considered separately, in the property that unites them they yet must yield to their neighbors, the French.⁵⁷

⁵⁶*History of England* (1754-62).]

⁵⁷[In the *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* (1764), Kant says: "Among the peoples of this continent I think it is the *Italians* and the *French* who distinguish themselves from the rest by their feeling of the beautiful, but the *Germans, English, and Spanish* who do so by their feeling for the sublime." (Ak. II, 243).]