

as after all it was from this view too that the true reverence and understanding of art arose historically. For that opposition on which we touched, asserted itself not only in the abstract reflection of general culture, but even in philosophy as such, and only now, when philosophy has thoroughly understood how to overcome this opposition, has it grasped its own essence and therefore at the same time the essence of nature and art.

So this point of view is not only the reawakening of philosophy in general, but also the reawakening of the science of art; indeed it is this reawakening alone that aesthetics proper, as a science, has really to thank for its genuine origin, and art for its higher estimation.

I will therefore touch briefly on the history of the transition which I have in mind, partly for the sake of the history itself, partly because in this way there are more closely indicated the views which are important and on which as a foundation we will build further. This foundation in its most general character consists in recognizing that the beauty of art is one of the means which dissolve and reduce to unity the above-mentioned opposition and contradiction between the abstractly self-concentrated spirit and nature—both the nature of external phenomena and that of inner subjective feeling and emotion.

### (i) *The Kantian Philosophy*

It is the *Kantian* philosophy which has not only felt the need for this point of union, but has also clearly recognized it and brought it before our minds. In general, as the foundation alike of intelligence and will, Kant took self-related rationality, freedom, self-consciousness finding and knowing itself as inherently infinite. This recognition of the absoluteness of reason in itself, which has occasioned philosophy's turning-point in modern times, this absolute starting-point, must be recognized, and, even if we pronounce Kant's philosophy to be inadequate, this feature in it is not to be refuted. But since Kant fell back again into the fixed opposition between subjective thinking and objective things, between the abstract universality and the sensuous individuality of the will, he it was above all who emphasized as supreme the afore-mentioned opposition in the moral life, since besides he exalted the practical side of the spirit above the theoretical. Having accepted this fixity of opposition recognized by the thinking of the Understanding,

he was left with no alternative but to express the unity purely in the form of subjective Ideas of Reason, for which no adequate reality could be demonstrated, and therefore as postulates, which indeed are to be deduced from the practical reason, but whose essential inner character remained unknowable by thinking and whose practical fulfilment remained a mere ought steadily deferred to infinity. And so Kant had indeed brought the reconciled contradiction before our minds, but yet could neither develop its true essence scientifically nor demonstrate it as what is truly and alone actual. It is true that Kant did press on still further in so far as he found the required unity in what he called the *intuitive understanding*; but even here he stopped again at the opposition of the subjective to objectivity, so that while he does affirm the abstract dissolution of the opposition between concept and reality, universal and particular, understanding and sense, and therefore the Idea, he makes this dissolution and reconciliation itself into a purely *subjective* one again, not one absolutely true and actual.

10 In this connection his *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, in which he deals with the aesthetic and teleological powers of judgement, is instructive and remarkable. The beautiful objects of nature and art, the purposeful products of nature, through which Kant comes nearer to the concept of the organic and living, he treats only from the point of view of a reflection which judges them subjectively. And indeed Kant defines the power of judgement in general as 'the ability to think the particular as contained under the universal',<sup>1</sup> and he calls the power of judgement *reflective* 'when it has only the particular given to it and has to find the universal under which it comes'. To this end it needs a law, a principle, which it has to give to itself, and as this law Kant propounds 'purposiveness' or teleology. In the concept of freedom in the *Critique of Practical Reason*, the accomplishment of the end does not get beyond a mere ought, but, in the *teleological* judgement of living things, Kant comes to the point of so regarding the living organism that in it the concept, the universal, contains the particular too, and, as an end, it determines the particular and external, the disposition of the limbs, not from without but from within, and in such a way that the particular corresponds to the end of its own accord. Yet, once again, with such a judgement the

<sup>1</sup> These quotations from the *Critique of Judgment* are from § iv of the Introduction.

objective nature of the object is not supposed to be known; all that is expressed is a subjective mode of reflection. Similarly, Kant interprets the *aesthetic* judgement as proceeding neither from the Understanding as such, as the capacity for concepts, nor from sensuous intuition and its manifold variety as such, but from the free play of Understanding and imagination. In this concord of the faculties of knowledge, the object becomes related to the subject and his feeling of pleasure and complacency.

(a) Now, in the *first* place, this complacency is to be devoid of all interest, i.e. to be *without any relation* to our *appetitive faculty*. If we have an interest, curiosity for example, or a sensuous interest on behalf of our sensuous need, a desire for possession and use, then the objects are not important to us on their own account, but only because of our need. In that event what exists has a value only in respect of such a need, and the situation is such that, on the one side, there is the object, and, on the other, a determinate need distinct from it, to which we yet relate it. If, for example, I consume an object for the sake of nourishment, this interest resides solely in me and is foreign to the object itself. Now the situation with the beautiful, Kant maintains,<sup>1</sup> is not of this kind. The aesthetic judgement lets the external existent subsist free and independent, and it proceeds from a pleasure to which the object on its own account corresponds, in that the pleasure permits the object to have its end in itself. This, as we saw already above [pp. 36 ff.], is an important consideration.

(b) *Secondly*, the beautiful, Kant says,<sup>2</sup> should be that which is put before us without a concept, i.e. without a category of the Understanding, as an object of *universal* pleasure. To estimate the beautiful requires a cultured spirit; the uneducated man has no judgement of the beautiful, since this judgement claims universal validity. True, the universal is as such *prima facie* an abstraction; but what is absolutely true carries in itself the demand for, and the characteristic of, universal validity. In this sense the beautiful too ought to be universally recognized, although the mere concepts of the Understanding are not competent to judge it. The good or the right, for example, in individual actions is subsumed under universal concepts, and the action counts as good if it can correspond with these concepts. The beautiful, on the other hand, is to invoke a universal pleasure directly without any such relation

<sup>1</sup> *Critique of Judgment*, book 1, § 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, book 1, § 6.

[or correspondence]. This only means that, in considering the beautiful, we are unaware of the concept and subsumption under it, and that the separation between the individual object and the universal concept, which elsewhere is present in judgement, is impermissible here.

(c) *Thirdly*, the beautiful is to have the form of *purposiveness*<sup>1</sup> in so far as the purposiveness is perceived in the object without any presentation of a purpose. At bottom this repeats what we have just discussed. Any natural product, a plant, for example, or an animal, is purposefully organized, and in this purposiveness it is so directly there for us that we have no idea of its purpose explicitly separate and distinct from its present reality. In this way the beautiful too is to appear to us as purposiveness. In finite purposiveness, end and means remain external to one another, since the end stands in no inner essential relation to the material of its realization.<sup>2</sup> In this case the idea of the end is explicitly distinguished from the object in which the end appears as realized. The beautiful, on the other hand, exists as purposeful in itself, without means and end showing themselves separated as different aspects of it. The purpose of the limbs, for example, of an organism is the life which exists as actual in the limbs themselves; separated they cease to be limbs. For in a living thing purpose and the material for its realization are so directly united that it exists only in so far as its purpose dwells in it. Looked at from this side, the beautiful should not wear purposiveness as an external form; on the contrary, the purposeful correspondence of inner and outer should be the immanent nature of the beautiful object.

(d) *Fourthly*, and lastly, Kant in treating of the beautiful holds firmly that it is recognized, without a concept, as the object of a *necessary* delight.<sup>3</sup> Necessity is an abstract category and it indicates an inner essential relation of two sides; if and because the

<sup>1</sup> Throughout this passage Hegel is dealing with Kant and indicating his connection between artistic and teleological judgement. *Zweck* I have to translate as 'purpose' instead of 'end', and *Zweckmässigkeit* as 'purposiveness'. Bosanquet translates the latter by 'teleology', but he does sometimes translate *Zweck* by 'purpose'. This first sentence is a quotation from Kant, op. cit., § 17 *ad fin.*

<sup>2</sup> We make (finite) things for a purpose, e.g. a knife for cutting, but there is no essential relation between means and end. Cutting can be done with a razor. But in an organism limbs and life, means and end, are related essentially.

<sup>3</sup> *Critique of Judgment*, § 22 *ad fin.*

one is, so also the other is. The one in its specific character contains the other at the same time, as, for example, cause is meaningless without effect. Such a necessity of giving pleasure the beautiful has in itself without any relation whatever to concepts, i.e. to the categories of the Understanding. So, for example, regularity,<sup>1</sup> which is produced according to a category of the Understanding, does please us, although Kant requires for pleasure still more than the unity and equality belonging to such a category of the Understanding.

Now what we find in all these Kantian propositions is an inseparability of what in all other cases is presupposed in our consciousness as distinct. This cleavage finds itself cancelled in the beautiful, where universal and particular, end and means, concept and object, perfectly interpenetrate one another. Thus Kant sees the beauty of *art* after all as a correspondence in which the particular itself accords with the concept. Particulars as such are *prima facie* accidental, alike to one another and to the universal; and precisely this accidental element—sense, feeling, emotion, inclination—is now not simply, in the beauty of art, *subsumed* under universal categories of the Understanding, and *dominated* by the concept of freedom in its abstract universality, but is so bound up with the universal that it is inwardly and absolutely adequate to it. Therefore thought is incarnate in the beauty of art, and the material is not determined by thought externally, but exists freely on its own account—in that the natural, the sensuous, the heart, etc., have in themselves proportion, purpose, and harmony; and intuition and feeling are elevated to spiritual universality, just as thought not only renounces its hostility to nature but is enlivened thereby; feeling, pleasure, and enjoyment are justified and sanctified; so that nature and freedom, sense and concept, find their right and satisfaction all in one. But this apparently perfect reconciliation is still supposed by Kant at the last to be only subjective in respect of the judgement and the production [of art], and not itself to be absolutely true and actual.

These we may take to be the chief results of Kant's *Critique of Judgment* in so far as they can interest us here. His *Critique* constitutes the starting point for the true comprehension of the beauty of art, yet only by overcoming Kant's deficiencies could this comprehension assert itself as the higher grasp of the true

<sup>1</sup> See below, Part I, ch. II, B 1(a).

unity] of necessity and freedom, particular and universal, sense and reason.

(ii) *Schiller, Winckelmann, Schelling*

Therefore it has to be admitted that the artistic sense of a profound and philosophic mind has demanded, and expressed, totality and reconciliation (earlier than philosophy as such had recognized them) as against that abstract endlessness of ratiocination, that duty for duty's sake, that formless intellectualism, which apprehends nature and actuality, sense and feeling, as just a barrier, just contradicting it and hostile. It is *Schiller* [1759-1805] who must be given great credit for breaking through the Kantian subjectivity and abstraction of thinking and for venturing on an attempt to get beyond this by [intellectually grasping the unity and reconciliation as the truth and by actualizing them in artistic production.] For *Schiller* in his aesthetic writings has not merely taken good note of art and its interest, without any regard for its relation to philosophy proper, but he has also compared his interest in the beauty of art with philosophical principles, and only by starting from them and with their aid did he penetrate into the deeper nature and concept of the beautiful. Even so, one feels that at one period of his work he busied himself with thought more even than was advantageous for the naïve beauty of his works of art. Deliberate concentration on abstract reflections and even an interest in the philosophical Concept is noticeable in many of his poems. For this he has been reproached, and especially blamed and depreciated in comparison with Goethe's objectivity and his invariable naïveté, steadily undisturbed by the Concept. But in this respect *Schiller*, as a poet, only paid the debt of his time, and what was to blame was a perplexity which turned out only to the honour of this sublime soul and profound mind and only to the advantage of science and knowledge.

At the same period this same scientific impulse withdrew Goethe too from his proper sphere—poetry. Yet, just as *Schiller* immersed himself in the consideration of the inner depths of the *spirit*, so Goethe pursued his own proper genius into the *natural* side of art, into external nature, to the organisms of plants and animals, to crystals, the formation of clouds, and colours. To this scientific research Goethe brought his great genius which in these subjects had altogether thrown to the winds the outlook of the mere

# AESTHETICS

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BY

G. W. F. HEGEL



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Silenus with the Infant Bacchus

*frontispiece*

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